

THE RURAL FOUNDATION, MANAGEMENT, AND CHANGE ON FRUIT FARMS :
A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED FARMS IN THE ELGIN AREA

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the degree of Masters in Sociology.

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ABSTRACT

This is an exploratory study which investigates changes introduced by management on farms in Elgin and explores the perceptions of some of those involved in the changes. The initiatives and activities of the Rural Foundation for Community Development (Rural Foundation) and its involvement in these changes forms a crucial part of the exploration.

Three questions direct the study.

1. What are the changes that have been introduced?
2. Why were they introduced?
3. What is the social meaning of the changes?

The study is based on a case study of four farms. Documentary material was collected from a variety of sources including the Rural Foundation, the South African Government, as well as other agencies operating in the field. Interviews with various actors were conducted, including management and a selection of workers on each of the four farms, Rural Foundation officials as well as other actors connected to the developments on the farms.

The study is informed by historical materialist theory and draws from certain labour process theories. Important for the study was the discussion raised in these theories around the effect that workers' motivation has on their productivity.

The study is located in the context of the national historical development of capitalist agriculture since the Second World War. More specifically it is situated locally in terms of changes that occurred on Elgin farms more generally prior to the 1980's as well as the present general circumstances in the area.

Three fields of change are identified on the four farms: (i) training of workers, (ii) new incentives and pay structures, and (iii) community development. It is asserted that these changes are measures introduced by management in an attempt to, firstly, decrease production costs by employing greater numbers of women and migrant workers and paying them less. Secondly, they are aimed at increasing the productivity of workers through measures designed to improve the 'quality' and stability of workers and to develop a new authority structure on the farms.

Four trends are thus identified as occurring on the farms:

1. Increasing use of women and migrant workers.
2. An improvement in workers' living conditions and standards.
3. An increasing emphasis on improving workers' productivity.
4. A shift in the emphasis of control towards developing workers' consent.

NOTES AND TERMINOLOGY

1. The research for this study was carried out in the period from September 1986 to December 1989. During the earlier period, 1986 to 1988, I focused on trying to establish a broad understanding of the Rural Foundation and I undertook a search for literature on capitalist agriculture more generally in South Africa. This search culminated in the production of a "Loose compilation of resources on Farm Workers in South Africa" for a service agency, the Community Education Resources, based at the University of Cape Town. I was part of the agency in 1987 and 1988. My role in the agency was to develop educational resources emerging out of the research that I was doing for this study. These resources were then to be used by organisations in the broader society. In fulfilling this role I produced a booklet, "It's a struggle on the farms", a brief history of union attempts to organise farmworkers in the Western Cape.

The main primary research material for this dissertation was gathered in 1989. This included the case study interviews as well as much of the documentary material. A number of newspaper articles and some readings of the first few months of 1990 have been used. These mainly report on research dealing with conditions in South Africa in previous years, for example, the housing shortage in South Africa generally and the level of debt amongst farmers.

What this has meant is that the findings of this study do not take into account possible changes that may have occurred on the farms due to the change in political climate that has come

about since the official unbanning of the various political organisations in February 1990.

2. In this study I have used the terms white, coloured and African. I use these not because I agree with such racial classifications. Rather, the South African government and farmers in South Africa have, and continue to, use this classification of people for their own political and economic purposes. Workers' lives - for example, the wages they receive, the places where they live - are therefore very much affected by such classifications as I discuss in various chapters.

3. Some newspaper articles and many of the interviews were in Afrikaans. When I have quoted from this material I have used the English translation in the body of the text and inserted the original Afrikaans as a footnote. The meaning conveyed by certain words, however, is often lost when these are translated. It is important to note here, therefore, that I have used these quotes as I have understood them in Afrikaans.

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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

In research conducted during 1985 (Mayson, 1986), I investigated reasons for the lack of formal trade union organisation amongst farm workers in Worcester, Western Cape. While doing that research, I realised that most farm workers' living and working conditions were very bad and they lived in a situation where the farmer brutally dominated most of their day to day lives. On some of the farms I visited, however, the living and working conditions were much better and the workers' relationship with the farmer appeared to be relatively amicable. This difference, I discovered, seemed to be connected to the initiatives of the Rural Foundation for Community Development (RF). I found that the Rural Foundation is sponsored by the government and supported by the South African Agricultural Union (SAAU) (1). It operated on a number of farms nationally with the expressed aim of upgrading the conditions of life of the farm workers.

On the surface, it was clear that the living standards of workers had improved dramatically on some farms. But how were these changes to be explained and what were the motivations behind them? With this basic question in mind, this dissertation began with an attempt to investigate the Rural Foundation. I was specifically concerned with questions such as:

- what were the specific programmes of the Rural Foundation?
- what interests were involved?

(1) The SAAU is the national farmers' organisation and represents both the various area-based farmers' associations as well as the different marketing co-operatives.

- what was giving rise to a concern to upgrade farm workers' living and working conditions?

Very soon in the research process, it became clear that the changes under investigation were not in fact being simply initiated by the RF. Behind the activities of the RF was an underlying concern coming directly from farm management. That concern was also being taken up in specific initiatives by individual farmers, as well in programmes being developed by a number of other organisations. These included the National Productivity Institute (NPI), the National Training Institute (NTI), and the Packing Co-operatives in the area.

In order to explore this situation, my research field developed to include an investigation of the activities of other organisations. It also became necessary to focus on the actual implementation of changes on the ground. For reasons which will be discussed below, I chose a case-study of four farms in the Elgin area.

In terms of the Marxist theoretical framework which was informing my research, workers under capitalism are forced to sell their labour to a capitalist in order to live. According to the same theoretical perspective, the underlying force driving capitalist farmers (as with capitalists in any other sector of industry) is a concern to maximise profits. I was therefore faced with the question of why farmers would spend money on improving conditions for workers. Profitability of capitalist enterprises is affected by a variety of factors including the cost of raw materials,

machinery, and labour; and other factors such as the demand for the product and the productivity of workers. Amongst the issues of central importance in capitalist efforts to improve workers' productivity are the level of skill and the subjective attitude and motivation of the worker.

The capitalist will be concerned to encourage workers' motivation to work in a way which maximises output and minimises cost. In considering the question of why farmers would spend money on improving conditions, I was therefore directed to investigate the relationship between improved conditions, and attempts to maintain efficient and profitable production. In terms of the theoretical framework which I was using, the maintenance of efficient and profitable production necessarily means capitalist control over workers. But control is complex and can include measures aimed at developing the consent of workers, as well as simply coercive measures. The issues under investigation therefore demanded an examination of the relationship between the changes occurring on the farms and forms of capitalist control.

In the light of the research concerns outlined above, this study therefore aims:

- to give a description of the various changes taking place on the four farms making up the case study;
- to situate and contextualise those changes historically;
- to explore the relationship between those changes and attempts to maintain (or increase) productivity and control.

1.1. Establishing the Initial Research Concerns

I knew from my honours research that generally very little had been written regarding workers on farms in present-day South Africa (2) and, after my initial review of the literature for this study, I realised that even less had been written about the RF's involvement there. It was clear from the outset therefore that the research would be exploratory and that the interviews with people involved with or informed about the RF would form the basis of the initial part of the research.

In pursuing the research therefore, I began by interviewing the general manager of the RF, Okkie Bosman, about the RF's aims, objectives, methods, and so on. The interview covered a wide variety of aspects but most important at that stage of my research was that I was made aware that the RF saw a link between

(2) A number of papers had been written for the South African Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU) 'Farm Labour Conference' in 1976. Important for this study were, amongst others, Petersen's "Changes in farm labour in the Elgin district" and Levy's "The Seasonal Labour Market in Agriculture - An Empirical Study". Then in 1984 there was the Second Carnegie Inquiry into Poverty and Development in Southern Africa at the University of Cape Town. No paper focused on the Elgin fruit farming area but there were more general helpful papers such as Budlender's "Agriculture and Technology: Four case studies". In 1987, there was a 'Workshop on the South African Agrarian Question: Past, Present and Future' at the University of the Witwatersrand. While, again, no papers focused on fruit farming in Elgin, a number of papers were useful for this study especially in terms of the national historical contextualisation - Stavrou's "The Restructuring of Agrarian Capitalism after 1950" and Cooper's "Ownership and Control of Commercial Agriculture in South Africa". Finally, a number of more in-depth studies are available, for example, Marcus's "Restructuring in Commercial Agriculture in South Africa" (1986) and Stander's "Tree of Life" (1983). It must be said that a number of the papers in the debate started by Morris's "The State and the Development of Capitalist Social Relations in the South African Countryside: a Process of Class Struggle" (1976) were consulted but the debate itself does not fall into the confines of this study.

'community development' and productivity.

The RF's view according to Bosman (1986) is that

"It is very important in any business that the working people must be developed correctly, they must be utilised correctly, and they must be managed correctly. If that is done in a proper way, ...if the quality of the management within any kind of business is sound, it is much easier for the whole community to pay for increased development. ...And that is a very important point of departure. So we relate productivity to people's development."

The Rural Foundation's stated aim is community development amongst farm workers. Their argument is that productivity of workers must be increased to enable more money to be available for community development.

Bosman also informed me that 65 - 70% of their funds come from the government, through the Department of National Health and Population Development. This department co-ordinates a broad Population Development Programme (PDP). In order to understand this link and the reasons for the government's involvement in the RF, I interviewed a public relations officer of the PDP, Swanepoel (1987). From this discussion and the material that Swanepoel gave me it was clear that the overall aim was similar to that of the RF, that is

"to enhance the standard of living and quality of life of all people in South Africa." (PDP pamphlet)

The motivation for the RF and the PDP programmes are, however different. While for the RF, the motivation is improving the quality of life, for the PDP, this is for the purposes of curbing population growth;

"Research and experience have shown beyond any doubt that, when the quality of life increases, fertility decreases."

(PDP pamphlet)

I have outlined the broad aims of the RF, and the PDP. But what was actually happening on the ground? How were these aims being played out in the RF's projects on the farms? What were people's experiences of these projects? In order to establish answers to these questions I decided to focus on a particular area and carry out a more in-depth study of the RF's activities in that area.

1.2. The Case Study

With these questions in mind, I asked Bosman's advice on which area to use as a case study. He suggested I focus on Elgin, an export apple farming area in the Western Cape (3). He said that because some of the farmers in that area had started development projects in the 1970's, the RF's community developers (field workers) had had a head start and the RF's projects were relatively successful in the area.

I then asked for permission from the Elgin Community Development Association's Executive Committee (4) to research the Rural

(3) The Elgin Valley is approximately 70 kilometers from Cape Town in an east-south-easterly direction. See map Appendix Three.

(4) The local association of Rural Foundation farmers.

Foundation's activities in their area. They said I should consult with the local community developers. I went to interview the developer who was in charge of 'manpower development', Developer 1, in order to understand his activities and to develop a broader understanding of the Elgin area (Developer 1,1987).

During this interview, Developer 1 explained that he was busy developing a training course for workers around the aspects of knowledge and skills of the production process as well as workers' attitudes to work and management. The aim was to make the RF dispensable in the future by training 'instructors' on the farms who would then train the workers (5). He told me that the two other developers were involved in 'social development', the development of women's clubs, creches, youth clubs, sport and liaison committees.(6)

This interview made me aware that there were two processes happening on the farms, namely community development and skill and attitude training. I thought at that stage of my research that it was only the RF that was involved in this type of 'development' initiative.

The next stage of trying to establish an understanding of the RF was selecting a sample of farms where the RF had introduced

(5) Developer 1 was very influential in the formulation of the National Training Institute training courses which I discuss in Chapter Five.

(6) The liaison committee is initiated by the RF and is an elected workers' committee which liaises with management about the workers' community problems. I discuss it in Chapters Five and Six.

projects. On these farms, I planned to observe what was happening and conduct in-depth interviews with management and workers. The aim of this was to establish their understanding and perceptions, as well as obtaining accounts of their experiences of the processes of change on the farms. The sample of farms had therefore to be kept small in order to be able to research each farm in depth. As the focus was changes on RF members' farms the sample could only include RF members, of which there were 55 in 1989. It was, therefore, decided that five farms, ten percent of the possible farms, should form the sample of farms to be investigated.

With the help of Developer 1, an initial five farms were selected for investigation. The selection was based on three dimensions; 1. the size of the farm (both large and small), 2. the length of time that management had been involved with 'community development' and the RF (old and new members), and 3. the success, in the developer's eyes, of the projects on the farms (successful and less successful farms).

The farms were chosen in this way so that I could look at programmes at different levels of development as well as the different ways in which farmers upgrade conditions on the farms. The aim, therefore, was to see a spread of the ways in which development occurs on ECDA member farms. ECDA members are those that have made a definite decision to upgrade conditions on their farms and they could, therefore, be expected to be models of such developments. In this way, the study aims to be

representative of the spread of the ways in which farmers upgrade.

The managers on three of the initial farms selected, however, did not want me to interview them. Various reasons were given to me - on the first farm, the manager was too busy; on the second, the manager felt that if my focus was the RF's projects, that farm was a bad example as they had initiated their own development projects without the assistance of the RF; and on the third farm, the farm was about to be sold.

I returned to the RF community developers for advice and spoke to Developer 2 (Developer 1 had since left the RF). Together, using the same criteria, we selected another two farms. I then visited these four farms and interviewed both the manager and a selection of workers on each of the farms. These four farms form the sample of the study. I was also able to conduct an interview with the manager on a fifth farm and this was helpful in various respects and so has been included in the study. The four farms in the sample included two large farms, one of which was successful (in the developer's view) and two small farms, again one of which was successful.

1.3. Informants

After my interviews with Okkie Bosman (RF), Swanepoel (PDP) and Developer 1, and in preparation for interviews on the farms A to E, I developed two checklists with prompts and open ended questions; one for the managers and one for the workers. (See

Appendix 1).

The questions were designed with the following broad concerns:

- to establish what types of changes had occurred on the farms previous to and since the farmer had joined the Rural Foundation;
- why workers and managers thought these changes had been introduced;
- what effect workers and managers thought these changes had had;
- the impressions of workers and managers of the various changes.

I went on to each farm aiming to interview management and workers.

On farm A, I had two interviews with the white general manager (Manager A). The initial interview was conducted first in his office and then in a bakkie as I was shown around the farm. The follow-up interview was conducted in his office. I asked Manager A if I could speak to a selection of workers, occupying various positions on the farm (7). Manager A then selected five workers.

Worker A1 was a coloured supervisor who was the chairperson of the liaison committee. Worker A2 was also a coloured supervisor but not a member of the liaison committee. Worker A3 was a coloured general labourer and the treasurer of the liaison committee. Worker A4 was the coloured NTI-trained instructor but was not a member of the liaison committee. Worker A5 was an

(7) I wanted to speak to supervisors and general workers, some who were on the liaison committee and others who were not; coloured and African workers; and finally the instructor, trained by the NTI.

African supervisor and was also the chairperson of the migrant workers' committee. These interviews were all conducted in the general manager's office.

On Farm B, I first interviewed the coloured general manager in his office and then interviewed three workers. These workers were selected in a manner similar to the selection of workers on Farm A. Worker B1 was the coloured NTI-trained instructor occupying a supervisory position during the thinning and picking phases on the farm. This interview was conducted in the training room where workers meet every morning for a briefing. Worker B1 was not a member of the liaison committee. Worker B2 was a coloured general labourer and was a member of the liaison committee. The interview was conducted in the orchard a short distance from the other workers. Worker B3 was an African general labourer who was not a member of the committee. The interview was also conducted in the orchards. I did not use a tape recorder for this interview and thus recording of Worker B3's responses was limited to quick note-taking.

On Farm C, I interviewed the white owner, Manager C, in his office (8). I then interviewed the coloured mechanic/overseer (Worker C1). This interview was conducted in the manager's office. I also interviewed a coloured woman worker (Worker C2) who had recently had a child and so was not working at the time. This interview was conducted in her home.

(8) It was only on farm C that I interviewed the actual owner of the farm. On farms A, B and D, I interviewed management and I have assumed that they supported and furthered the owner's interests.

On Farm D, I interviewed the white general manager, (Manager D1), the daughter of the owner. The interview was conducted in the 'boardroom'. I interviewed the white accountant (Manager D2) as he had been on the farm prior to Manager D1 joining the staff. I conducted a follow-up interview with Manager D2 to establish certain specific features of the farm, for example the size of the farm and as well as to clarify management's attempts to increase productivity. Worker D1 was the coloured builder and general maintenance person on the farm and was considered by management to be one of the more outspoken workers on the farm. (This was Manager D2's reason for suggesting I speak to him). This interview was conducted in Worker D1's house. I also interviewed the coloured piggery forewoman and her husband, a tractor driver. This interview was conducted in their home, and I have called these two employees together Worker D2.

I returned to each farm on a number of occasions and while on the farms observed various aspects of the production process - for example picking on Farm A and pruning on Farm B. I also observed relations between workers. In addition, on each of the farms, I observed workers' living and working conditions.

As I said earlier, I did interview the general manager (Manager E) on another farm, Farm E. This provided insight into, especially, the involvement of the packing co-operatives' in training.

Besides the informants on the farms, I interviewed the Rural Foundation community developers. As I have already indicated, I

interviewed the white Community Developer 1 on the general aims and methods of the Rural Foundation. I also conducted an in-depth interview with Community Developers 2 and 3 (9) on their specific jobs. Developer 2 was a coloured man responsible for youth, sport and liaison committees and Developer 3 was a coloured woman responsible for creches and women's clubs (10).

For further understanding of the broader issues surrounding the Rural Foundation in Elgin, as well as the history of its involvement, I firstly interviewed the previous white chairperson of the ECDA executive committee (Kilpin) who explained the links between the different farmers' associations, the packing co-operatives and the farmers' union (11). Secondly I interviewed the coloured private 'community developer', Calvert, on the largest farm in the area as he was a 'co-opted' member of the ECDA executive and had been involved in the formation of the Rural Foundation (12).

Thirdly I interviewed an organiser of the Farmworkers Project of the Food and Allied Workers Union. He had organised workers on farms in the Elgin area in 1988 and the beginning of 1989. He had been involved in some strikes in the area and he gave me the union's perspective of the RF's activities in the area.

Fourthly, I had an informal discussion with Downs, one of the

(9) Also using a checklist.

(10) See Chapter Four.

(11) See Chapter Four.

(12) See Chapter Three.

initiators of a farmers' labour code in Elgin, the Cape Fruit Growers Code. I discuss this code in Chapter Four.

Finally, during my interviews with the farmers and the workers especially, I discovered that there were other organisations also operating on the farms. Firstly, there was the National Training Institute (NTI) which trained workers directly on the farms. I interviewed the white Elgin Co-ordinator of the organisation in order to establish their aims and methods. Secondly, there was the National Productivity Institute (NPI), a government sponsored organisation also involved with training workers. I interviewed the white human relations specialist in the Deciduous Fruit Unit on their aims and methods (13).

1.4. Interview methods and validity

As I have indicated, the main research method used was in-depth interviews. This method was used as I felt that because of the exploratory nature of the research, the method allowed respondents to discuss freely, raising issues they regarded as important - and in the process they could possibly alert me to other processes at work.

There are problems with this method however. Blumer (1979) (14) discussed the criticisms of the in-depth interview method.

"Many critics charge that the authors of personal accounts can easily give free play to their imagination, choose what

(13) See Appendix Four for a list of all the interviews conducted.

(14) Quoted in Plummer (1983:101).

they want to say, hold back what they do not want to say, slant what they wish, say only what they happen to call at the moment, in short to engage in both deliberate and unwilling deception. They argue, accordingly, that accounts yielded by human documents are not trustworthy."

This fact about the in-depth interview method does affect the reliability of the findings in that the method does not ensure that if another person were to conduct an equivalent study that similar findings would be obtained. However, when it is the subjective story of the human actors that the researcher is after, as is the case in this study, then the in-depth interview is the most valid way of obtaining such information. (Plummer, 1983:102). My aim, as I have indicated, was to listen to, and understand, the actors' perceptions of the changes occurring on the farms and thus this method was considered to be the most useful.

The shortcomings of the method, however, mean that the researcher needs to take account of and try to minimise the various sources of bias inherent in the method. Plummer (1983:102) identifies three domains of bias that have an effect on the material collected.

- (i) That arising from the subject being interviewed.
- (ii) That arising from the researcher and
- (iii) that arising from the subject-researcher interaction.

Firstly, as regards subject bias, on each of the farms, it was management that made the final choice as to which workers I

interviewed. It is therefore possible that the workers I interviewed were more supportive of management than the general workforce was.

Further, on Farms A and B especially, where much has been done to upgrade workers' conditions, it may be that management gave me a better impression of conditions on the farm and their relationship with the workers than actually existed.

Secondly, bias may have emerged due to the reactions of management and workers to me. The farmers in the area had recently had adverse publicity emerging from Louw's (1987) study on the area. This and the fact that I was asking questions about workers' conditions, which management determines, may have further affected their responses. For workers, I was a relatively rich, white man asking about management. It would not be unlikely therefore if workers mistrusted my motivations and, either consciously or not, adjusted their responses accordingly.

Thirdly, a number of the interviews with workers were conducted in the manager's office. I felt that some of these workers seemed restricted in their answers to questions especially about unions. In the interview with Worker A2 (1989), for example, the discussion suddenly became reduced to single word responses.

"So you think the union won't help ?

No, mister

You don't need it here on this farm ?

No, mister

Do the other workers need it ?

Mister, I can't really say now. I only talk for myself.

Are you satisfied ?

Yes, mister." (15)

Also in the interview with Worker C1, when I asked questions as to whether he was satisfied with the wages, he gesticulated in the direction of the next room where the accountant was working. Other workers, for example, Worker A4, merely spoke softer while being more open. In response to a question as to whether he thought workers on the farm would join unions, he said,

"Yes, if they just had all the information... Look I know what's going on, but I don't really want to talk about it."

(Worker A4, 1989) (16)

When I interviewed workers in their own homes, the interviews were much more relaxed and open. During the interview with the man and woman I have called Worker D2 (1989), they were quite happy to show their dislike for some of the management. They explained, for example, that the fruit manager "talks rudely to you" (Worker D2, 1989) (17).

(15) Original: "So u dink die unie sal nie help nie ?

Nee, meneer.

U het dit nie nodig nie, hierso op die plaas ?

Nee, meneer.

Het die ander werkers dit nodig ?

Meneer ek kan nou nie sê nie. Ek praat nou net van my af.

U is tevrede ?

Ja, meneer."

(16) Original: "Ja as hulle nou net die hele inligting het. ...Kyk ek weet nou waarom dit gaan, maar ek wil nie graag daaroor praat nie."

(17) Original: "praat lelik vir jou."

I tried to take account of these various biases by, firstly, asking both management and workers similar questions. The responses of these could then be compared. Secondly, I asked similar questions in different ways. For example, in trying to assess workers' support for management's initiatives, especially of the liaison committee, I asked the workers I interviewed not only how they felt about such initiatives but also whether other workers felt liaison committee members were 'informers' or not. In this way, the respondent could talk about such resistance but distance him or herself from it. Finally, by interviewing the trade union organiser in the area, I would argue that it was a further balance as he was able to alert me to the similar situations on other farms in the area.

These checks do not eliminate bias from the research. The aim of the checks is only to decrease the effect that bias has on the research and to make the reader aware of the possible variables emerging from the inadequacies of the research method. Plummer (1983:103-104) sums this problem up saying that

"(T)o purge research of all these 'sources of bias' is to purge research of human life. It presumes a 'real' truth may be obtained once all these biases have been removed...Any truth found in ... a disembodied neutralised context must be a very odd one indeed. It is precisely through these 'sources of bias' that a 'truth' comes to be assembled. The task of the researcher, therefore, is not to nullify these variables, but to be aware of, describe publicly and suggest how these have assembled a specific 'truth'".

1.5. Documentary Material

In addition to interviews, documentary material of different types and sources was collected.

1.5.1. I collected newspaper articles from a variety of national and regional newspapers. These related to, amongst other things, the RF's activities, the government's attitude to the problems in agriculture, the farmers' reactions to government involvement in agriculture and reports on fruit production.

1.5.2. I consulted Rural Foundation publications and reports. These included the national annual reports since 1985 and the Elgin area reports of 1987, 1988 and 1989. Examples of the service contract, the disciplinary code and procedure and the grievance procedure, developed for their member farmers' use, were also obtained.

1.5.3. Annual reports of the SAAU for the years since 1981 were consulted.

1.5.4. A number of government reports were used. Amongst others, I consulted the study "The Science Committee of the President's Council's report on Demographic Trends in South Africa" (Report PC1/1983) (18), the report of the Committee for Economic Affairs of the President's Council called "A strategy and action plan to improve productivity in R.S.A." (Report PC1/1989) and I used a 1984 White Paper on Agricultural Policy (WPM -84).

(18) It was in reaction to this study that the Population Development Programme was started.

1.5.5. I collected reports on productivity in the deciduous fruit industry prepared by the National Productivity Institute (19).

1.5.6. Information pamphlets of the National Training Institute were collected which described the NTI's general philosophy and aims and another describing the Winners Programme (20).

1.6. Developing the study

On the basis of my initial concerns, the process of research was revealing that 'community development' was only part of the changes happening on the farms. It became apparent to me that rather than just focusing on 'community development', the managements on these farms were involved in various types of changes. I have categorised these changes into three types. Firstly, either through their local packing co-operatives or through other organisations like the NTI and NPI, the managers had introduced training courses for workers - both skills training and 'attitude' training (21). Secondly, a number of new incentives and pay structures had been, and were still being introduced. Thirdly, there were a number of changes related to community development with which the RF developers were mainly involved.

(19) These reports included the 1987/88 National annual report of the NPI as well as a "Productivity Survey: Apple and Pear Picking and Packing in the Western Cape" (1983). I also used various pamphlets that the NPI produced, for example, describing the 6M simulation game (see Chapter Five).

(20) See Chapter Five.

(21) See Chapter Five.

The process of research, therefore, took me from the RF's projects to a focus on the managers and the changes introduced by them on Farms A to D.

My aim, therefore, became to understand the meaning of the changes to which I had been alerted, to investigate why the managers were introducing these changes and to investigate what they were trying to achieve through the training, new incentives and community development.

1.7. Theoretical Conceptualisation

This new focus and aim required further reading and meant that different theoretical tools were needed to try to understand the information which I was receiving through the interviews. Before I discuss these particular theoretical aspects it is important to assert that the fundamental nature of the relationship between farmers and workers is understood to be capitalist. This means that farmworkers do not own any of the means of production, except their own ability to work - their labour power. The land, the tractors, the irrigation equipment and so forth, are all owned by the farmers, the capitalists. Because their labour power is the only aspect of the productive forces that the workers possess, they have to sell it to a capitalist to be able to reproduce themselves - to live.

The capitalist, on the other hand, owns all the means of production except the ability to put those means to work - labour power. He or she, therefore, buys the labour power of

dispossessed workers for a wage. Basically then, the capitalist's interest is in increased profits while the workers' interests are in increased wages and conditions, which means less profit for the capitalist. There is therefore an irreconcilable clash of interests (22).

Nevertheless, and this was important for the new direction that the study took, certain labour process theories discuss a further contradiction in the relationship between capital and labour. Littler and Salaman (1984:56) (23), explained that this contradiction stems from the fact that, on the one hand, the relationship between capital and labour is exploitative. (1984,56). On the other hand, and at the same time,

"Workers have an interest in the maintenance of the capital/labour relations and the viability of the units of capital which employ them." (Littler and Salaman,1984:56)

In the context of competition amongst different capitalists, workers have an apparent interest in ensuring that their bosses survive as it seems to mean that they will continue to have a job and earn a wage. Importantly, in the context of the farms, however, it also means that 'permanent' workers and their families will continue to have houses as the houses are tied to the farm jobs.

Edwards (1974)(24) explained the effect that this contradiction

(22) For a fuller discussion of this fundamental basis of the capitalist relation see Marx (1968) "Wages, Price and Profit".

(23) Using Cressey and Mac Innes (1980).

(24) Quoted in Littler and Salaman (1984,55)

has on the productivity of workers. Under capitalist production, he explains,

"Labour power can be bought, but between the purchase of labour power and the real appropriation of useful labour comes a wedge: the will, motivation and consciousness of the workers drastically affects the work force's productivity."

In the context of a production process dominated by the capitalist's interest of profit accumulation, the amount of labour that the capitalist can exact from the worker depends on the willingness of the worker to work. The capitalist, therefore, in fulfilling this aim has to ensure that

(i) the production process is co-ordinated

"to avoid the haphazard and wasteful use of the instruments of labour and to meet the requirements of purchasing, finance, marketing and other factors." (Thompson, 1983:122)

But more importantly in relation to Edwards (1974) above

(ii) the capitalist must ensure that authority is exercised

"over the labour of others ...(as) a means of obtaining 'the desired work behaviour from others'." (25)

Control is therefore a crucial factor. But, as I explained earlier, the relationship between capitalists and workers is contradictory and workers' productivity depends, amongst other things, on their motivation. Management, therefore, develops a number of strategies to achieve this control and motivation. Fox (25) Edwards (1979) quoted in Thompson (1983:122).

(1985:15) has identified a number of these. They include

"coercive power, social conditioning, manipulative persuasion, unilateral attempts to gauge and satisfy employee 'needs' in so far as this serves management interests by evoking desirable employee attitudes, and, finally, bilateral consultation and negotiation between management and employee representatives designed to achieve mutually acceptable compromises, arrangements and understandings on a limited range of issues."

Workers' responses to these strategies of control on the other hand may mean that they

"work indifferently, regulate their own work behavior in ways which obstructs management purposes, quietly subvert authority or openly challenge it, and totally withhold all spirit of loyalty to, or identification with, the company. At the other extreme, their responses, may be such as to prompt them to work keenly and conscientiously, offer willing co-operation with management's leadership, submit readily to its command, and identify themselves loyally with the company". (Fox,1985:14)

When I use the term 'control' therefore, it must not be thought of only in terms of coercive repression of workers. Rather, control

"must be seen in relation to conflict and in relation to the potential terrain of compromise and compliance." (Littler and Salaman,1984:56)

These theoretical points are helpful in enabling us to interpret

the processes at work on the farms. The framework is useful in developing an understanding of the complex situation where, for example, it is the same manager, Manager A, who in the past used to shout at people (Worker A5, 1989) but who now has a fairly amicable relationship with the workers. Worker A5 told me that

"The boss said himself we mustn't keep quiet. 'If there is something, speak, don't be scared of me. Speak, then we can clear the thing up'." (26)

Awareness of this contradiction helps us, also, to understand, for example, how workers on Farm B can work so efficiently and carefully to produce export-grade apples that they have won a trophy for the best quality apples in the area for the last ten years. (27)

Yet during the thinning phase of the production cycle (see Chapter Four) when each day's work is crucial for high quality apple production, all the workers came out on strike for a day thereby threatening the quality of the apples.

This theory helps us to understand that it is not merely due to the benevolence of the farmers that these changes are being introduced. We can understand that they are part of a

"social technology which top management seeks to maintain for the pursuit of its purposes" (Fox, 1985:14)

Finally, these theoretical tools help us to look for and explain contradictions in farmers' and workers' behavior. These tools

(26) Original: "Die baas sê self ons moet nie stil bly nie. As daar iets is, praat, moet nie bang wees vir my nie. Praat, dan kan ons die ding oplos."

(27) The trophy is given by the local packing co-operative.

assist us further in realising that the apparently contradictory aspects of behaviour of farmers and workers are not so much contradictory but are rather evidence of the struggles around the different aspects of control which the farmers develop for the purpose of increasing workers' productivity.

This theoretical perspective has informed much of the investigation on which this dissertation is based. It was particularly useful in Chapters Five and Six where the case study material is presented and analysed. Nevertheless, it must be said here that the process of management's control, and especially the development of consent, is complex. I discuss in Chapter Six the difficulty I had in using these concepts to understand the changes I observed on the farms.

1.8. The Sample

The information in this section describes key aspects of each farm and was derived from my interviews with the farmers, the workers and the developers, as well as my own observations.

I have called the farms A, B, C, and D and named the corresponding managers as Manager A, Manager B and so forth. The workers, on Farm A for example, I have named Worker A1, Worker A2 and Worker A3. I have done this to prevent possible repercussions against workers that might result from the views expressed by the workers on management, and workers' unions. I also made a commitment to Manager B to keep the material anonymous.

1.8.1. Farm A

Farm A was a relatively large farm of 200 hectares with 132

hectares planted, mostly with apples of different types but also with pears (28). The total crop in the 1989 season was 4264 tons of apples and 423 tons of pears. Output of apples per hectare on this farm was highest in the sample but slightly lower than the average for the Elgin area - 57.5 tons/hectare (t/h) (Manager A, 1989) as against 58.06 t/h for the area as a whole. (NPI Productivity Matrix, 1990). The percentage of apples which was sent to be packed was on average 75% of the total apple crop and about 49% of the total crop was first grade. The output of first grade fruit per hectare, therefore, was 27 tons per hectare. (29).

(28) The average in the area is 50 hectares (Louw, 1987:3).

(29) One of the major reasons that farmers and the Rural Foundation give for introducing changes on the farms is that they hope it will improve workers' productivity. The figures above, and those that follow for the other farms, are intended to give an indication of the productivity differentials on the four farms. It is very difficult, however, to compare the productivity levels on the different farms because there are so many factors affecting these levels. For example, the figures for the output per worker per day do not give an indication of the quality of fruit that those workers are producing. The most valuable indication of productivity differentials would therefore be the average income generated by each worker. Even so, however, it would not be a fair measure to compare such figures for the different farms. This is because each farm has its own climatic and soil conditions amongst other differences which affect the level of output. The best indication would therefore be to compare the percentage change in the average income generated from each worker over a number of seasons for each farm. In this way the effect on workers' productivity of the changes introduced by management could best be measured and compared for the four farms.

While this might be the best measure, the different managements do not all keep such information and some were not willing to make it available. The figures for the overall output in tons per hectare, the percentage of first-grade fruit and the output in tons of first grade fruit per hectare are, therefore, used as an indication of the productivity differentials between the four farms. These figures give an indication not only of the care with which the workers worked but also the level of scientific knowledge that was applied to the production process by management, for example the timing and the depth of the thinning process; see chapter four.

While the farm is privately owned, the owner did not seem to be very involved with the running of the farm, as the farm was managed by a group of managers. Firstly, there was the general manager who grew up on the farm and has a diploma from the Elsenburg Agricultural College. Secondly, there was a business manager, an accountant who has had a number of years experience with one of the large life assurance companies. Thirdly, there was a production manager, who worked directly with the workers. This manager had not had any formal training but was undergoing a training course for middle management with the National Training Institute (NTI) (30). There was also a supervisory group of between five and eight supervisors (31). These supervisors were also in the process of going through a training course with the NTI. Finally there was an instructor who had been trained by the NTI and who had trained the workers on the farm, in respect of 'knowledge, skills and attitude'(32).

There were 58 'permanent' coloured, male workers employed on the farm. Fifty coloured women who lived on the farm were all employed in the picking season. During the rest of the year these women were divided into two groups working one week on, one week off. They were always officially employed on a casual basis. The African workers were all male migrant workers employed on 12 month, 8 month and 4 month contracts.

(30) See Chapter Five.

(31) Depending on the phase in the year's production cycle.

(32) Similar to that referred to earlier by Developer 1.

Management was, however, busy phasing out the 4 month contracts because, according to Manager A (1989.b)

"the 'boys' don't really want to come down for four months. There's not enough profit. The period of pay is too short."

As a result the shortest contract employment period was to be eight months. Two groups of workers would be employed - one group employed from October until after the picking season in May while another group employed from January until September. This meant that during the picking season, from January until May, about 50 migrant workers were employed while at other times 25 remained. There were thus a total of about 150 workers employed during the season, decreasing to about 100 workers for the rest of the year.

On all the farms I visited the wages varied according to whether employees were 'permanent' or casual, and according to race, gender, job category or skill, age, length of time on the farm and the phase of the yearly cycle (33).

On farm A, the wages varied from lowest to highest in the following way.

(i) the lowest basic wage on the farm was for a young, African migrant worker who had only come to the farm that year. He received R42 per week.

(ii) Women, generally, all received the same basic wage of R50 per week.

(iii) A coloured, general labourer, who had been on the farm for

(33) It is difficult assessing wages on the farms as they are paid in different ways by different farmers, ie. basic, production incentives, bonuses of different sorts.

four years received R63 per week. (Worker A3).

(iv) The NTI - trained instructor (Worker A4) received a standard wage throughout the year, (ie. not affected by the season) of R95 a week. He was, however, still on probation as an instructor and was therefore expecting his wage to be increased soon.

(v) The basic wage for the highest paid African, migrant worker was R87 a week (Worker A5). He was a supervisor and had been returning to Farm A for the past 15 years.

(vi) Coloured supervisors' wages again varied from R125 a week (Worker A2) to R160 (Worker A1), both of whom also drove tractors and who had been on the farm for at least ten years.

Housing for coloured workers on the farm was of a comparatively high standard (compared to housing provided for workers in the cities). Each coloured worker family had either a two or three bedroomed house with electricity, waterborne sewage systems, hot and cold water in the houses and each house was fitted with an electric stove.

The African workers at that time shared a very small, dark room between four workers. The compound was unpainted and the workers had to cook on a coal stove outside. The workers had recently asked management for "a helluva nice undercover gas burner" (Manager A, 1989), and management was in the process of getting this made. Management had also recently committed themselves to improving the quality of the migrant workers' housing.

The upgrading process on Farm A had begun in the late 1960's with

the employment of a social worker. She had been trained in Cape Town and only stayed on the farm for one year. Other qualified nurses or social workers were employed in the intervening years until eventually management decided to rather employ one of the women who lived on the farm permanently to run the creche and to perform other social work functions on the farm.

"And the people just accepted her better than this educated, grand lady." (Manager A, 1989)

There had also been a functioning liaison committee on the farm since 1976. When I visited the farm it had eight members; one African man, five coloured men and two coloured women.

Management had been part of the (ECDA) since it started in 1982 and had consistently involved itself in community development on the farm. More recently management had introduced training of the workers with the National Training Institute (NTI) (34) in a direct attempt to increase productivity.

1.8.2. Farm B

Farm B was a large farm of 220 hectares of which only 35 hectares were planted. Much of the rest of the land was on the side of the mountain and thus too steep for fruit production. Some of that land was used for forestry. The main crop was apples but there were also pears and experiments were being carried out with kiwi fruit.

Productivity on the farm was high with a total apple crop of 1397 tons in the 1989 season. The output per hectare for the total

(34) See Chapter Five.

apple crop was 52,5 tons, and 74% of the total crop was sent to the packers (that is first, second and third grade fruit). This farm had a very high level of first grade fruit - 63% of the total crop. The output of first grade fruit per hectare on this farm was, therefore, 33 tons per hectare, the highest in the sample.

The owner of the farm involved himself in production but limited this involvement to the pruning phase. He was, however, in continual contact with the coloured farm production manager (Manager B). This manager had had no formal agricultural training but had learnt in the field over the previous 17 years. Subsequent training had been in the form of personnel management courses through the NTI.

There were three supervisors who supervised at different times in the year. During the thinning season, when more care was needed (Manager B, 1989), they used two supervisors. In the pruning season and in the picking season there was only one supervisor for the whole workforce. During seasons that the extra supervisors were not required, those supervisors reverted to the position of a general worker so no specific supervisory strata existed on the farm. One of these supervisors was also the farm's NTI instructor (Worker B1) and ran all the courses for the work throughout the year (35).

There were 12 permanent, coloured male workers on the farm whose wives all worked throughout the year either in the orchards or in

(35) See the section on NTI in Chapter 5

the creche and preschool (these women were again all classified as 'casual'). There were also 14 African, male workers who, although they were migrant workers, were relatively permanent on the farm, returning every year on 12 month contracts. Three African men, at a time, were allowed to have their wives visit from the Transkei. These women, then, also worked on the farm if they wished.

Wages were comparatively high on this farm, with the basic wage for any male worker at R69 a week. Wages could be increased if additional qualifications were acquired by workers. This could be done by taking courses, which management arranged with the NTI, in skills such as pruning and tractor driving. Women got paid a daily rate of R10.50 (a total of R52.50 a week if she worked a full five-day week).

Housing on this farm was also comparatively good. Each house had two or three bedrooms, a bathroom and toilet, electricity and kettles and fridges were provided. While there was no difference between the houses of coloured and African workers, the occupation of houses was structured differently for African workers. A group of four African migrant workers shared one house while three of the houses were made available to African workers who took it in turns to have their wives and families to visit from the Transkei.

The development processes started on this farm with the upgrading of the workers' houses in 1975 but it was only since the Rural Foundation began work in this area in 1982 that the processes

broadened out to include a women's club, a creche and preschool and a strong liaison committee. The committee consisted of three African men, two coloured men and one coloured woman. On the level of direct attempts to increase productivity, management first drew in the NTI in 1986. The trained instructor had since conducted continuous training courses of various kinds.

1.8.3. Farm C

Farm C was a small apple farm - 45 hectares in total, 32 hectares planted, mainly with apples, 29.5 hectares, but also with some pears. This farm had a very low total crop, 846 tons; the corresponding total output per hectare being 28.05 tons. A high percentage of the crop was sent to be packed, 84% (the highest in the sample), and 72% of this was first grade. Because of the low total tonnage per hectare, however, only 17 tons of first grade fruit were produced per hectare, the lowest in the sample.

The farm was managed by the owner (Manager C). There was an accountant who also performed the role of pay mistress, so that workers discussed their wages, debt repayments and so on with her. There were no formal supervisors on this farm. One worker (Worker C1), however, the mechanic and panel beater on the farm, performed the role of overseer of work in the orchard, conveying directions from the Manager C. Besides this worker, the person who performed best in a particular job during the production phases in the year, became the temporary supervisor, the worker in charge. Manager C was thus in continuous contact with the workers, controlling production directly.

There were only 32 workers on this farm. Thirteen of these were permanent male workers and nineteen of them were female workers. This farm was different because unlike Farms A and B, it did not distinguish between coloured male workers and African male workers on the farm. There were two African men who had 'married into the coloured families' and who lived permanently on the farm, not returning to the Transkei.

Manager C (1989) did not employ seasonal workers from the Transkei or Ciskei, because, he said

"I'm using all my girls. (These women as employed as) casuals 'cause when it rains they don't get paid."

Wages on this farm were comparatively low. The mechanic (Worker C1) received the highest wage - R85 a week. The lowest wage for a male worker, and this was for the "youngsters", was R47.50 a week. Unlike the other farms, Manager C paid a basic wage plus a piece rate incentive for picking and for pruning and for almost any other job performed on the farm.

Housing conditions on this farm were particularly bad. The houses were situated in three separate groups around the farm as this farm had previously consisted of three separate farms. I visited one of the 'better' houses which had electric lights and plugs. The house consisted of two rooms, a bedroom and a lounge-kitchen-dining room. The toilets were communal pit toilets and were situated about 20 meters from the houses (Worker C1, 1989). Water for each house was supplied by an outside tap.

Community development on Farm C only really started after the

Rural Foundation began operating in the area, and had also been very limited since that time.

The initial aim according to Manager C (1989) was to encourage "some sort of activity rather than sitting and drinking." Not much sport occurred as there were no facilities. The old packing shed, converted into a community hall, was mainly used for church get togethers. Since the ECDA started, Manager C (1989) said that

"We have had such an influx of people going to different sorts of churches and that occupied their whole weekend."

A liaison committee was formed on the farm but the previous chairperson had been fired because of drinking and driving. The farmer said that he wanted the mechanic to be the chairperson but there were large divisions between the 'drunkards' and the religiously converted on the farm. As the mechanic was regarded as a 'drunkard', many workers did not support him (36).

There had been very little training of workers on Farm C. The only training had been of the tractor drivers through the Cape Pomological Association (37). The most important way in which the farmer tried to increase productivity directly was through paying incentive wages -

"that to me is the only way that the productivity increases." (Manager C, 1989)

(36) See Chapters 5 and 6.

(37) The Cape Pomological Association is based in Paarl, Western Cape. Using external training agents it serves the farmers in the deciduous fruit industry in human resources and technical and mechanical skills training. (See Training Directory for Agriculture in the Western Cape, 1989:38).

1.8.4. Farm D

Farm D was also a larger farm of 175 hectares. 100 hectares were planted mainly with apple, pear and plum trees. This farm also had poultry and a piggery.

Apple yields per hectare on this farm were also relatively low, 42.1 tons. The total crop of apples was 2038 tons of which 80% was sent to the packers. First-grade fruit comprised 52% of the total crop but again because of the lower total yield per hectare, the yield of first grade fruit per hectare was relatively low, 22 tons.

Management on the farm consisted of a poultry manager, a piggery manager and a fruit manager. There was a general manager (Manager D1), the daughter of the farm owner, who also played the role of a personnel manager. There was an accountant (Manager D2) who acted as a general administrative person. Each of the section managers had a foreman or forewoman under them. The fruit foreman was a white man, the poultry foreman was a coloured man and the piggery forewoman was a coloured woman (Worker D2). There were no supervisors as such on the farm but the tractor drivers, according to Manager D1 (1989)

"at the moment are sort of their team leaders, to a certain extent; they often come to you and say this one's not pulling their weight, or we have a problem in our team."

Due to problems in the past (38), the owner of the farm stopped employing migrant labour from the bantustans for the fruit

(38) I was unable to ascertain what these problems were.

division. According to Manager D1 (1989), the present general manager, however,

"blacks are very good with animals so the blacks are used up there (in the piggery and with the poultry)."

Since the scrapping of the "Coloured Labour Preference Policy", the management was allowing the wives or girlfriends of the African workers to live and work on the farm (39).

There were, therefore, about 32 coloured worker families on the farm. Of these families, both the parents and some of the children were employed. There were about 10 African worker families and about 10 African single men. There were, therefore, a total of about 100 workers on the farm.

Wages on this farm were comparatively low amongst the four farms. The coloured tractor drivers (only men) earned between R15 and R18 a day - R75 and R90 a week. Coloured, male, 'general labourers' earned R 65 a week. African, male, 'general labourers' earned between R40 and R62.50. Coloured women earned R40 a week while African women earned R35 a week. In addition to pay incentives for picking, and as an attempt to curb absenteeism, each male worker was liable for an attendance bonus of R5 a week if they worked five days in a week.

(39) I discuss this policy in more depth in Chapter Two but it is important to introduce it here. In line with their aim of creating independent homelands, the Nationalist government introduced the preference policy in 1954 to discourage the employment of African workers, and especially African women workers, in the Western Cape. This was officially scrapped in 1984.

The standard of housing was also relatively low on the farm although this had improved in the previous three years. As on Farm A, there was a difference between coloured and African housing. The original houses for coloured workers consisted of two rooms and a kitchen with the water supply and a pit toilet located outside. These houses had been upgraded with hot water, inside toilets and bathrooms and electricity. African workers, however, lived in rondawels divided in half in which groups of single workers shared each half. When I visited the farm, the African families were each staying in half a rondawel but management was planning to put doors in the dividing walls to make two roomed houses.

The development process only started on this farm when the farmer joined the ECDA in 1986. Although the daughter of the farm owner was originally employed as personnel officer to deal with the formation of the creche, women's clubs, youth clubs and the liaison committee, after two and a half years only the creche was still functioning. There had been renewed attempts to revitalise the liaison committee when I was there and they seemed to have been successful.

Training for workers has been very limited on Farm D. The NTI had trained an instructor but this instructor had not carried out much training with the workers (40). The foreman and forewoman in the poultry and piggery division had had initial training with the NTI but management regarded these courses as too time-consuming and training was subsequently stopped.

(40) See Chapter Five.

It can be seen therefore, that there are definite differences between the farms in the sample. Farms A and B have stressed the upgrading of the workers' conditions and their training, while Farms C and D have not placed much emphasis on these aspects. As regards productivity it is interesting to note that on Farms C and D a higher percentage of the total crop consisted of first, second and third grade fruit but the total yield per hectare was much lower than on farms A and B. What this meant was that the yield of first grade fruit per hectare was much higher on Farms A and B than on Farms C and D and thus productivity, and the profitability, of Farms A and B was much higher. It is important to stress, however, that these differences in levels of productivity are not necessarily due to the changes introduced on the farms; the study has not measured the other factors, for example, the climatic and soil differences between the farms. Nevertheless, the correlation between the level of productivity, and the standard of training and community development indicate that there might be a link.

To help in asserting these differences, I have classified Farm A and Farm B as relatively advanced. By using the term advanced, I mean that they have embarked on extensive programmes in both 'community development' and training. Farm C and D I have classified as less advanced as they have very little community development and no on-going training.

These differences between the farms are characteristic of differences in the capitalist agricultural sector more broadly. Between sub-sectors and within sub-sectors of agriculture there

are vast differences between farms in terms of the productivity of the production process and wealth of the farmers. These differences affect the types of strategies that farmers introduce in their quest for increased profits. The Elgin area is a particularly rich farming area which means that farmers can, generally, easily obtain the funds to improve workers' conditions, for example, if they feel they need to as part of their strategies. Further, amongst the farms in the sample, these differentials mean that differences occur in the type of relationships between farmers and workers, the emphasis that the farmers place on training and community development and the nature of the projects on the farms. For this reason, throughout this study continual references will be made to differentials amongst farmers, the 'advanced' farmers usually being referred to as rationalising farmers.

1.9. Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have tried to present a picture of the training, incentives and community development changes occurring on the four farms in Elgin. This has been done using the perceptions of those initiating and participating in these changes. I have also tried to present an understanding of these changes based on the argument that they represent an attempt by farmers to increase workers' productivity and change the forms of labour control.

In Chapter Two I present a national historical overview of the

problems facing farmers related to questions of productivity and labour control in South Africa since the 1940's. In that chapter I also discuss various solutions to these problems that were attempted by the government and by the farmers. The Rural Foundation was part of the attempt at solving the farmers' problems in the 1980's. In Chapter Three I look at the Rural Foundation's philosophies and structures and this serves to introduce the Rural Foundation and give a national overview of its activities.

I use the Elgin area generally, and the four farms in Elgin specifically, as a case study in order to examine changing conditions in the 1980's. In Chapter Four, in an attempt to create the immediate context within which these changes occurred, I give a profile of the Elgin area including an examination of the annual production cycle in apple farming.

I take a more in-depth look at the four farms in the sample in Chapter Five, developing an overview of the changes made on those farms in terms of training, incentives and community development. In Chapter Six, I try to analyse the different changes arguing that they represent managements' attempts at increasing productivity and changing the forms of labour control. I conclude, in Chapter Seven, by assessing the impact of the Rural Foundation, presenting four possible trends in South African agriculture in the 1980's and 1990's raised by the Elgin case study and suggesting possible implications of these changes.

CHAPTER TWO THE NATIONAL HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Introduction

This study looks at the profitability crisis in capitalist agriculture in the late 1970's and 1980's period and the strategies adopted by management on four farms in Elgin in their attempt to solve this crisis. The strategies that management adopted, as I discuss in Chapter Six, have included changing the composition of the workforce and paying them less, as well as trying to improve the productivity of workers through, especially, changing the emphasis of their labour control methods.

My reading of various texts on South African agriculture, most importantly Marcus (1986), alerted me to the fact that profitability crises, whatever their cause, have been important factors in determining the types of changes in the production process introduced by farmers with the assistance of the South African state. For the purposes of this study, changes in relation to productivity and labour control have been most important. Marcus (1986:34 - 39) identifies three phases since the Second World War. These are related to the interlinked political and economic aims of the state's intervention in agriculture, namely the maintenance of white rule and the promotion of conditions for increased capital accumulation.

The first phase, 1948 to the early 1960's, was characterised by farmers demanding increasing amounts of labour from labour

tenants and decreasing the amount of land made available to them. State intervention, in assisting this process, "acted to push the capitalisation of agriculture onto a higher plane." (Morris,1977:1)

In the second phase, from mid-1960 to the mid-1970's, the focus was on increasing the level of labour-replacing mechanisation and removing the 'excess' workers off the farms. The third phase, the mid-1970's to the time of writing, 1989, is "inseparable from the onset of a deep political and economic crisis in the social formation as a whole." (Marcus:1986,37). It is characterised by increasing farmers' debt and an increasing emphasis on improving the productivity of workers.

State assistance throughout this whole period was crucial. It included aspects aimed at labour supply as well as various subsidies aimed at improving the profitability of farms more generally. In each phase I will discuss how this assistance changed with the changing needs of the state and the farmers and how the different types of measures were interrelated. Also in each phase I deal in depth with the different aspects of the labour supplying legislation. It is important to point out at this stage however that the different types of subsidies that the state did make available remained essentially the same during the period that I deal with. The emphasis and the target group of farmers that the subsidies were aimed at changed in each phase. I will therefore discuss the different types of subsidies here and then in each phase discuss the different emphases. Myburgh (1976) discusses nine different types of measures:

1. Assistance with soil and water conservation measures. The Soil Conservation Act was passed in 1946. This Act set up a National Soil Conservation Board whose task, in co-operation with farmers was to encourage the improvement of farming methods and soil conservation practices of farmers. (Hobart Houghton, 1976:62).
2. Protective services - pest and disease control. Control over the standard of fertilisers, stock feed and sprays.
3. Research and extension services. Research takes place at universities as well as at government research farms.
4. The co-operative movement and finance; Co-operatives are involved with the handling and marketing of agricultural produce as well as with the supply of farming requisites and services. According to Hobart Houghton (1976:67) the co-operative movement started in 1922 with 81 societies and 14 282 farmer members. By 1960 there were 319 societies with 285 101 members and by 1973 there were 531 societies with 429 055 members. Included in this category of state assistance is the Land Bank. It was established in 1912 with the passing of the Land Bank Act. It provides production loans through the co-operatives as well as loans for farm improvements such as dams, fences and farm workers housing. The Land Bank is, however, mainly concerned with long term mortgage facilities.
5. Assistance and settlement: This was a particular characteristic of the Agricultural Credit and Tenure Act. Only introduced in 1966, the state aimed to provide

assistance to farmers who were no longer able to obtain essential funds from commercial financial institutions in times of setbacks. This included making state land and funds available for the purchase of privately owned land in order to convert small units into land which would provide an adequate income. (Myburgh,1976:4). (See later in this chapter)

6. Stabilising prices and assistance with marketing. During the 1920's there were a number of schemes aimed at raising domestic prices. These culminated in the Marketing Act of 1937. Under this Act, a National Marketing Council was set up with five members appointed by the Governor-General, as well as a Producers' Advisory Committee and a Consumers' Advisory Committee. Commodity Control Boards could also be set up. These boards had to have a producer majority and they were granted many powers. They could act as the agent for the product and prohibit the sale of the product through any other channel besides themselves. They could set prices of the product and prohibit its sale at any other price. The board thus had a monopoly over the sale of the product. (Hobart Houghton,1976:59). What this meant was that often the price that farmers were paid for the produce from their farms was set above that of international prices and so if it was exported it would be exported at a loss. Also with a guaranteed price for their product they developed a tendency towards inefficient farming methods (Groenewald and Nieuwoudt,1979:71), as well as a tendency towards over-production. By 1961 there were seventeen marketing boards

controlling seventy per cent of all agricultural produce in South Africa (Hobart Houghton, 1976:59).

7. Ancillary services including statistical services and commodity inspection especially as regards import and export arrangements.
8. Ad hoc assistance: after drought and flood disasters.
9. Subsistence of fertilizers, transport as well as the price of staple food products such as butter, maize and wheat.

This historical focus to the study aims to show that the changes on the farms in Elgin (which I discuss in Chapters Five and Six) are not isolated historical events, expressing only the benevolence of the farmers. Rather these changes can be seen as part of the historical struggles between farmers and workers around the farmers' need to accumulate capital. Strategies that farmers (and all capitalists) develop in their effort to accumulate capital are affected by many things including the level of development of the productive forces, the level of resistance of workers, and the nature and level of state assistance, as I will try to show. But these strategies all contain contradictory elements that the farmers may only be able to resolve by changing the strategy they had adopted. This dynamism in social developments, that I will try to show in the discussion of the historical phases, then helps in our understanding of how the different measures introduced by the Elgin farmers in the 1980's, are themselves part of a dynamic process.

Before I discuss the different phases, it is important to point out that this study is limited to a focus on changes in Elgin. Elgin is an export apple producing area in the Western Cape, and the Western Cape has specific characteristics. Of particular note is the fact that already by the 1920's, as Hofmeyer (1985:63) says,

"(A)griculture was characterised by the production of commodities and the wage form predominated, even in the case of permanent labourers on the farm".

In the rest of the country the situation has been more complex with a form of labour tenancy continuing in some areas until 1980 (see Marcus, 1986:146). This has meant that, amongst other things, the focus of the struggles between farmers and workers was different. In the Western Cape these struggles revolved around wages and living conditions for example, while in the rest of the country, the emphasis was on the diminishing access to land by tenants and the increasing amount of labour demanded by farmers.

Furthermore, as I will discuss in Chapter four, farming in Elgin is very different to farming in the rest of the country. The favourable local natural conditions combined with the increased revenue obtained from the export of the apples make Elgin an extremely profitable farming area.

The national contextualisation is nevertheless important for the study because firstly, the technological advances of the productive forces have proceeded at an equivalent pace

nationally (1). Secondly the state has developed national policies, although these have been used in their regional specificities (2).

In this chapter then I discuss the three historical phases, and look at the accumulation problems faced by the farmers, the struggles between farmers and workers, the solution that the farmers and the government embarked upon, and the outcome, in each phase.

2.1. The 1940's to the mid-1960's phase

According to Morris (1976:320), the structural conditions facing farmers during this period included

"(T)he rise in the value of land, shrinkage in farm size, more intensive cultivation, lack of sufficient cash to increase farm wages substantially, continuously declining prices, and the piling up of debts."

A number of factors were important in the development of these conditions. Firstly, there was an increasing demand for agricultural products from the expanding urban areas, especially during the war years when producer prices of dairy products, meat and maize were raised in order to stimulate production. Secondly, there was a change in the productive forces, specifically the increased use of tractors - the number of tractors increased from 20 000 in 1946 to 133 552 in 1964 (Groenewald, 1971:16).

(1) See, for example, Stavrou's discussion of mechanisation in South Africa (1987:14 -22).

(2) See, for example, Marcus (1986:153 - 155).

This mechanisation was made possible through state assistance and "amounted to capital substituting (tractors for oxen) rather than labour saving" (Stavrou,1986:15). It led to an expansion of agricultural activities through increasing the area under cultivation and increasing the yields (Stavrou,1986:15). The total area of farmland increased from 84,92 million hectares in 1936 to 89,217 million hectares in 1970 (Natrass,1988:109) while the total area of cultivated land more than doubled in a similar period, 1930 to 1976 (ibid.104).

This presented two problems for expanding farmers as regards labour supply: a general labour shortage and a problem with the prevailing labour tenancy labour form. Labour tenancy gave tenants rights to the land which the farmers now wanted for increasing production. The tenancy contract also stipulated and limited the number of days that workers were required to work and thus exacerbated the labour shortage problem.(3)

These farmers, therefore, began forcing changes to the contract between them and the labour tenants. For labour tenants, this meant that, firstly, their access to both cattle and land, was reduced. Secondly, their control over their own labour power was slowly diminished as they were required to work for longer periods during the year. Workers resisted these attempts by farmers and this, in turn, exacerbated the labour shortage.

(3) It is important to say here that not all farmers wanted to abolish labour tenancy. It seems that it was rather the wishes of the more capitalised farmers who dominated in the South African Agricultural Union. (see Marcus (1986:121 - 123)). I discuss this further later.

The farmers' union, with the direct assistance of the state, developed an offensive to "press tenants into exclusive farm service and channel Africans, in general, into farm labour." (Marcus,1986:123).

During and after the Second World War, the various farmers' unions made repeated requests of the government of the time to intensify its involvement in their problems. The farmers saw

"relief only in action by the government and that only in the direction of compulsion on the Natives to accept farm work and the imposition of further restrictions upon the movements of those already so employed." (4)

The Smuts government's attitude was explained by the Minister of Agriculture in 1942, when he said that

"we cannot and may not create a condition of compulsory labour in South Africawe don't want to force labour, and just the same as with the other matters, there are certain economic laws in regard to labour. I can't take people by the scruff of their necks and tell them that they have to go to work here or there. We have to leave it largely to the free choice and wish of the labourer himself to say where he is going to work." (5)

Instead of force, the government suggested

"paying higher farm wages, improving working conditions and

(4) Native Farm Labour Committee Report (1939) in Morris (1977:11).

(5) Quoted in Morris (1977:12)

appointing inspectors to see that standards were improved in voluntary conjunction with farmers." (Morris,1977:12)

The Farmers' Weekly's response to these suggestions was that

"while (they) are admirable in theory and would no doubt be effective in practice, the sum of their cost in application will, to the minds of most farmers, not solve the question of the way and means for finding the ready cash, which in these days is the acutest of the problems which the farmer is called upon to solve." (6)

This lack of cash enabled farmers to link the shortage of labour to the importance of price support mechanisms. The editorial of the Primary Producer explained this connection.

"Every move towards efficiency will be frustrated unless a national effort is made to stop what is now a fast flowing current of labour from the country to the town....Undoubtedly greater efficiency will permit the payment of higher wages to farm workers.... but farmers need money to attract the efficient workers.... and this is why the price stability provided by the Marketing Act and the Control Board system is essential." (7)

So the SAAU adopted a 'Native Policy', prepared by the Natal Agricultural Union, in 1944. The essence of this policy was to divide the workers into industrial and agricultural sections and to simultaneously "transform labour tenants into settled full-

(6) Quoted in Morris (1977:13)

(7) Quoted in Findlay (1976:15)

time solely wage paid farm labourers." (Morris,1977:15)

After the 1948 election, the Nationalist Party immediately began helping farmers but it was only in the early 1950's that a more coherent policy developed which was in line with the farmers' labour problems and the Nationalist Party's political aims.

2.1.1. Directing Africans to the farms

In 1952, the Native Laws Amendment Act made law the SAAU's 'Native Policy' of 1944. With this law the urban (prescribed) and the rural (non-prescribed) areas were divided politically on a national scale and the movement and employment of Africans in and between them was controlled through a system of labour bureaux.

"District Labour Bureaux were set up in each Magisterial District (White area) and Native Commissioner's District (African area), together with local bureaux under Municipal Authorities, to regulate the supply of labour with a view to correlating it with the demands'. Any workseeker was to register with his bureau, which then kept a record of his employment and details of any contract made with a farmer."

(Ainslie,1973:39)

In 1953, there were 93 urban labour bureaux. By 1954, there were 450 of which 130 were urban and by 1957 there were 512 of which 234 were urban. (Marcus,1986:115). Further, by 1954, at least 79000 workers had been placed on farms by these bureaux. (Ainslie,1973:39).

But as Morris (1977:42) says

"(E)fflux control, influx control and labour bureaux could only distribute the African workforce... if the state was able to co-ordinate and track down the movement of all adult Africans".

So, also in 1952, the state introduced another law, the Natives (Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents) Act. This was the introduction of the "Reference Book" which included all documents that Africans had previously had to carry (tax receipts, passes, service contracts etc.) as well as adding an identity document (which included a photograph, fingerprint and registration number) and an employment card which the employer had to sign monthly and on discharging the worker. This 'dompas' had to be carried by all African people over the age of 16 and had to be produced on demand to a police officer. (Marcus, 1986:116)

These two laws worked together, on the one hand, to assert white minority rule and thus develop the political interests of the National Party. On the other hand, they were also aimed to serve as

"labour controlling instruments (to direct labour to the farms) in order to meet the needs of capitalising white farmers." (Marcus, 1986:119)

Natrass (1988:106) says that during the period 1937-1951, 80 000 african workers moved into the commercial agricultural sector and in the period 1952-1960 a further 45 000 workers.

A further way in which the state tried to help with the farmers'

labour shortage problems was through the development of the prison labour system. The Director of Prisons said in 1959

"Lack of labour is the farmers' greatest problem. The Department of Prisons has become the focal point for the farmer, from the Limpopo to the Cape. They all want labour from us but we cannot supply it all, but we are doing everything in our power to meet the emergency." (8)

There were two main 'schemes' of canalising prisoners to work on farms. The "interdepartmental scheme" worked on the basis of co-operation between the Departments of Native Affairs, Justice and Police. It was never gazetted officially and it seems to have been agreed to in 1949. Under this system, Ainslie (1973:21) explained,

"so-called 'petty offenders' arrested under the pass laws were given the 'option' of prosecution, or six or twelve-months' labour on a white farm. The maximum fine for these offences was in fact only 1 or 2. The men were lined up, ordered to 'volunteer', and their thumbprints attached to contracts they had not read. They were then hustled on to the lorries of waiting farmers."

The other 'scheme' was for convicted short-term prisoners who were leased out to farmers. This scheme had previously been called the '6d. a day scheme' (the amount paid to the prisoner upon release) but had been abolished in 1947 after the Lansdowne Commission had criticised its operation. Prisoners had deserted

(8) Quoted in First (1959:16)

and, on returning to jail, had reported bad conditions of employment and treatment. The Director of Prisons Report of 1952 said, however, that

"within a very short while numerous representations by influential bodies were made to the then Minister of Justice for the re-introduction of the scheme" (9)

The scheme was, therefore, re-introduced with some changes. The payment was increased to 9d a day and the prisoners were to be asked for their consent to work on the farms. (First,1959:16)

These prison labour schemes must be seen in conjunction with the new laws referred to earlier. The new pass laws provided a way of directing workers to the farms through the division of the labour force into rural and urban workers. They also, however, meant that there were many more petty offences with which people could be charged or potentially be charged with and so the numbers of prisoners or potential prisoners increased. These increased prisoners were then also directed to farms, at a very low cost.

In 1952, 40 553 prisoners were forced into farm labour through the '9d-a-day scheme'. In 1957/8 the figure was 199 312 prisoners. (First,1959:127).

2.1.2. Changing the labour form on the farms

The measures discussed above were introduced with the aim to help with the general shortage of labour by directing workers to the sector. But according to Eiselen, Secretary of Native Affairs,

(9) Quoted in First (1959:16)

there "was actually sufficient Native labour in the platteland to satisfy the needs of farming." (10)

The problem was that these labourers were tied up in squatter and labour tenancy arrangements with farmers. So, in order to force them out of such situations and encourage a more 'equitable' distribution of labour, the government amended the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act in 1954. This amendment was indicative of the fact that the recommendations in the 'Native Policy' of the South African Agricultural Union's and the state's attitude that "ordinary servants are the best type of farm labour, the most economical and most sensible" (11) had been reconciled.

There were two types of squatters that the state acted against.

These were those

"who were basically poor peasants occasionally hiring themselves out for wage labour but who in the main stood outside of the capitalist labour market; and squatters who were actually full-time migrants, either on farms in the vicinity or in the mines or industry in the towns but who left their families on a piece of land which they illegally rented from the farmer." (Morris,1977:47)

The aim of the legislation was to eradicate squatter arrangements as soon as possible by forcing them to become farm labourers or moving the squatter families of migrants to more 'suitable' areas

(10) Quoted in Morris (1977:52)

(11) Quoted in Morris (1977:47)

and freeing the land for the expansion of capitalist agriculture. There were two main ways in which the state tried to do this. Firstly, they increased, progressively each year, the registration fees that the farmer had to pay for the squatters on their land. The state hoped that

"within a few years it would not be an economic proposition for him to keep squatters unless rents were substantially raised, in which case it would not be economically feasible for the squatter to pay the increased rent."

(Morris,1977:49)

Secondly, these arrangements were only allowed to continue for 15 years, and this only with those squatters who could prove they had been resident on the farm since 1936, when the original Act was passed. After these 15 years "all remnants of the practice would be ruthlessly crushed" (Marcus,1986:119).

The amended law also included measures against labour tenants. Although the state wanted the wage form to prevail, it recognised that labour tenancy was still needed by some farmers. In 1960, for example, six years after the legislation had been introduced, the Natal Agricultural Union presented a memorandum to the Committee of Enquiry into the Native Labour Tenant System. It said that the system

"satisfied the Zulus' need to own livestock and cultivate land and, consequently, created 'a comparatively satisfied labourer.' The system was well suited to the farmer's lack of cash and to his attitude to the cash economy. If the farmer and labourer became mired in cash transactions, the

competition with commerce and industry would undermine the rural economy" (Greenberg,1980:92).

The state's recognition of these differences amongst farmers meant that the purpose of the Act, therefore, was to ensure a better distribution of labour tenants in the rural areas and to provide for an orderly and gradual transference from labour tenancy to full-time labour. (Morris,1977:46)

Under the new measures all tenants, old and new, had to be registered, at an increased fee. In order to be registered the tenants had to "render a minimum of 122 days labour service a year to the owner of the land on which they resided" (Marcus,1986:120), and furthermore, the tenancy arrangement had to have been in existence before 1956 for it to be registered. The Act also provided for the creation of Labour Tenant Control Boards (comprising three farmers and one Native Affairs Department official) in any district.(Marcus,1986:120). These Boards were empowered to

"investigate and pass judgement on the number of labour tenants any particular farm was allowed to accomodate" (Morris,1977:47).

Although this legislation was passed to take effect in all areas where labour tenants existed, in actual practice its effect was limited in some areas, especially Northern Natal and Northern Transvaal because

"undercapitalised farmers and labour tenants (were) both strongly opposed to its abolition, at least in the short

term" (Marcus,1986:123).

2.1.3. Workers' resistance and labour control methods

Workers' resistance to these attempts by capitalising farmers and the state, began before the introduction of the various laws I have discussed. There seem to have been two types of responses to this onslaught. Firstly, workers deserted the farms. According to Marcus (1986:105) the attraction of higher wages in the rapidly expanding manufacturing industry in the towns, workers' declining access to land and their labour, the coercive nature of the labour control on the farms and the

"deteriorating terms of the national oppression of the African majority combined to drive workers out of the (agricultural) sector".

Secondly, some tenants remained on the farms, despite the worsening situation. In this way, they maintained at least some hold on some land. They did this, Marcus (1986:124) says, because, amongst other reasons, as bad as "the terms of tenancy were, they were infinitely better than those for workers labouring under year service" .

The incentive to work and the methods of labour control therefore had been transformed from the rights and obligations of the semi-feudal labour tenancy system to that which primarily revolved around the politically coercive measures of the state locking workers into farm labour and the increasing dominance of the farmers' wishes on the farms.

This meant that labour practices on the farms themselves also changed. Firstly, for the prison workers as well as the ordinary workers, control was characterised by

"forced labour and brutal killings; death after assaults; daily beatings in the fields; locked compounds and armed guards; foul compounds infested with lice and rats". (12)

Secondly, eviction was increasingly common for those workers who had decided to try to remain on the farms. New Age, a magazine of the time, reported that on a farm in the Eastern Transvaal, the farmer introduced a number of changes, for example, raising rent, labour obligations and grazing fees. According to the report, tenants were

"'up in arms' and resolutely opposed the new terms, (but which) if they refuse to accept the farmer assured them that they would be evicted." (13)

By the late 1950's, these various intergrated measures had generally succeeded in their aims - the alleviation of the labour shortage. Morris (1977:44) says that

"farmers' journals and congresses ...had ceased to be predominately concerned with the farm labour shortage when labour was discussed".

According to Stavrou (1987:4) (14), by the mid-1960's

"white agriculture was beginning to experience an oversupply of black labour and black labour out-migration began to

(12) First (1959:4). See also Ainslie (1973:32)

(13) Quoted in Marcus (1986:122)

(14) Using Natrass (1981)

2.2. The mid-1960's to the late 1970's phase

The over-supply of workers at the beginning of this phase due to the success of the measures introduced by the state was aggravated by the development and spread of productive forces. Mechanisation, during this phase, became much more labour-replacing and so the over-supply of workers was further increased.

The change in state policy that was to emerge during this period was affected by the report of the "Commission of Inquiry into European Occupancy of the Rural Areas" (1959). The increasing number of black farm workers and the decreasing number of whites in the rural areas raised fears that

"if the tide does not turn and the growth of the non-white predominance on the white platteland continues, this state of affairs will in the end hold out a serious threat to white civilisation in the country." (16)

The solution to this problem, according to the report, was to firstly keep whites in the sector and secondly remove Africans out of the sector. This could be achieved through mechanisation. Marcus (1986:36) says that it was thought that mechanisation would

"improve productivity and profitability to ensure them (the whites) a 'civilised standard of living'"

(16) Commission quoted in Marcus (1986:35). Original emphasis.

It would also limit the need for black labour. It was hoped that "if farmers were to introduce a system of cash wages and hire strong, young labourers at a higher monthly wage, the number of Bantu in the rural white areas would greatly diminish". (17)

If this was successful, the Commission hoped further that

"1 800 000 of the 2 400 000 Africans living on white farms could be encouraged or compelled to 'return' to the homelands, leaving only the full-time wage labourers still residing in the white rural areas". (Greenberg,1980:95)

The 1959 commission reflected the state's and farmers' concerns of the period and culminated, on one level, with the passing of the 1964 Amendment to the Land and Trust Act of 1936, which I discuss later in this chapter. The continued inefficiency of production in the agricultural sector, however, motivated the government to appoint a further Commission of Enquiry in 1966. This became known as the Marais-Du Plessis Commission, after its successive chairpersons, and produced reports in 1968, 1970 and 1972. (Ainslie,1973:15)

Two interlinked processes therefore developed during this period; increasing capital intensity of production through mechanisation and a consequent reduction in the number of workers, and their removal from the farms. In both processes the state was a crucial factor and was fully supported by the SAAU, the representative of the more-capitalised farmers, who in their submission to the

(17) Commission quoted in Greenberg (1980:95)

Marais-Du Plessis Commission

"maintained with an eye towards reducing the size of the labour force, that mechanisation should be introduced into all aspects of production..... from beginning to end." (18).

2.2.1. Increasing mechanisation

By 1970, state policy had changed and it was reflected in the Marais-Du Plessis Commission. This was a shift from support and protection of "uneconomic white farmers" (Greenberg,1980:96) towards the "interests of large and corporate capital" (Marcus,1986:36) including the big farmers.

This shift also mirrored what was happening in reality. During this period there was a marked increase in "land concentration and farm unit consolidation." (Stavrou,1986:8). The number of farms decreased from 105 859 in 1960 to 90 422 in 1970 to 71 621 in 1978.(ibid.). The average farm size increased from 867 ha. in 1960 to 1193 ha in 1978 while the area of cultivated land decreased from 91,71 million ha. to 85,45 ha in the same period. This land concentration was accompanied by a number of related and interlinked factors.

- 1) Gross capital formation doubled from R110 million in 1963 to R221 million in 1973.(Africa,1976:15). This investment is also reflected in the increasing indebtedness of farmers in general - Total debt in 1961 was R655,4 million (Groenewald,1971:24) and in 1969 was R982 million. (Du Plessis Comm.,1972:44)

(18) Quoted in Greenberg (1980:96)

2) Between 1960/61 and 1970/71 there was a great increase in mechanisation and the use of various other technical inputs.(19). The number of tractors increased by 28,5%, the number of trucks by 36,2%, the value of fertilizer by 121%, the value of stockfeeds by 56,1% and the value of dips and sprays by 78,5%.(Tarr,1976:4b). The investment in new tractors, machinery and implements as a percentage of the gross capital formation in agriculture rose from 44.1% in 1957 to 61.6% in 1967 and decreased to 54,4% in 1977. (Stavrou,1986:19).

This concentration and mechanisation of agriculture led to more efficient production resulting in increased output- the physical volume of output increased from an index point of 99 in 1960 to 144 in 1971 to 182 in 1980. (Nattrass,1988:102). It also resulted in a reduction in the numbers of workers that were required per unit of output - approximately 1 000 workers were needed to produce R1 million output in 1960 and approximately 530 workers were required in 1971. (Tarr,1976:4a).

In one decade therefore the production process and its results had changed phenomenally. It is important to emphasise here that the machines that were being introduced were mostly labour-

(19) It is important to note Marcus' (1986:12-13) discussion on defining mechanisation in agriculture. Firstly, she says, it must include machine based technology other than tractors; for example 'sprinkler irrigation and micro- and macro-jet spray technology'. Secondly, mechanisation does not include non-mechanical technological innovations, especially biology and chemistry related ones which "have been increasingly important over the past three decades or so". She, therefore, uses the term 'mechanisation etc.' when referring to them all.

replacing, for example the combine-harvesters. Many workers therefore became superfluous to the production process. The results of these changes for workers therefore was that millions lost their jobs and were chased out of the sector as I discuss later in this chapter.

The state was directly involved in these developments. It assisted financially through continued price support systems and also through providing access to credit. Credit to farmers was channelled through different structures:

(1) The Land Bank continued to be the principle source of farmers' finance from the state during this historical phase. This occurred in the form of direct long term loans mainly for the purchase of land and amounting to a total of R259 million in 1969 (because of the proliferation of small farms in the post-World War Two period the government started favouring consolidation into larger "economic" units); medium term loans (introduced in 1959) against security of movable property and for the purchase of machinery and other farming requisites, amounting to a total of R8,4 million in 1969; short term loans for "defraying seasonal expenses incidental to production" (Du plessis Commission, 1972:47), a total of R2,1 million drawn in 1969 with R529 000 owing at the end of the year (ibid:48) and ; financing of farmers through the agricultural co-operatives and of the co-operatives themselves - long term loans under this system totalled R10 million in 1969 with a balance of R55 million owing at the end of the year while short term loans totalled R521

million in 1969 with R259 million owing at the end of the year. (ibid:49).

(2) In 1966, the Agricultural Credit Act was passed and it consolidated various previous Acts which were then repealed. Under the 1966 Act, the credit facilities provided by various government departments were co-ordinated and placed under the control of a single department, the Department of Agricultural Credit and Land Tenure. Under this Act the field of financing was considerably expanded (Du Plessis Commission, 1972:52) and included, amongst other forms, assistance to buy means of crop production, livestock, land, housing for farmworkers, and for the consolidation of debts. (Myburgh, 1976:13). If loans were granted they were to be repaid at a 5% interest rate. (see 1966 Act section 15 as amended in 1982).

Under this Act, an important provision for the purposes of this study became available in 1969. This was that farmers were able to obtain loans for the building of farmworkers houses of which five-eighths was subsidised. (see Government Budget for year ending 31 march 1984.) This amounted to R98 800 in 1969 (Du Plessis Comm, 1972:56) and increased to R1,1 million in 1974/75. (Myburgh, 1976:14).

More generally, the Agricultural Credit Board granted a total of R19 million in new loans in 1969, and in the period since its inception, three and a half years, it had granted R78 million enabling 1709 farmers "to obtain economic units." (Du Plessis, 1972:57).

Many of these financial provisions were available before this phase but the **target group** of farmers changed. State aid had previously been available to all farmers with an emphasis towards those who were in greater need. Increasingly during the 1960's and 1970's, however, loans were directed at the richer, more productive and established farmers.

With the provision of Land Bank loans for the purchase of an initial farm or for expanding the size of the property to "economic proportions", for example, the applicant was expected to contribute 20% of the purchase price from his own funds and to have sufficient factors of production (stock and implements) to ensure the success of his enterprise.(ibid:51). Thus only those richer farmers could afford these loans.

I have said that medium term credit through the Land Bank was introduced in 1959. One channel for these loans was through the co-operatives. The Du Plessis Commission explained, for example, that

"(F)armers in the grain-producing areas of the country often find themselves in urgent need of credit to purchase tractors, implements and other farm machinery. In order to make loan facilities available for this purpose with the least possible delay, certain co-operatives have made the necessary arrangements with the Land Bank. Under this scheme, a co-operative assist members in the completion and transmission to the Land Bank of applications for hypothec loans on goods purchased at the co-operative." (1972:46-47).

A basic requirement for such loans, however, was that the farmer had to make a cash contribution towards the purchase price ranging from 15% - 25%. This, combined with the fact that, according to the Du Plessis Commission, the securities for this type of loan are vulnerable, meant that

"the financial standing and the character of the debtor are of greatest importance. For this reason such loans are usually granted only to established farmers." (1972:47)

The direction of loans towards 'deserving farmers' was even clearer with Agricultural Credit Act. The assistance introduced through this Act was primarily for farmers who

"are still credit worthy and deserving and whose position is such, owing to factors beyond their control, that they will not normally be assisted by other credit institutions such as the Land Bank (and) commercial banks."

(Du plessis Commission, 1972:52)

According to the Du Plessis Commission,

" (p)ersons who have paid too much for land and are therefore overcapitalised or who have conducted other unprofitable transactions or operations do not qualify for assistance through the Agricultural Credit Board." (ibid).

In these different ways, then, State support for agriculture was directed more and more towards the more productive farmers. The extent to which the state did favour these farmers, however, is difficult to assess. Figures that are given about differentials amongst farmers in commercial agriculture, generally only

indicate the extent of concentration in the sector. The Marais Du Plessis Commission, for example, uses the 1966 report of the Secretary of the Inland Revenue Department as the statistical base in putting forward its argument that larger farms are more "economic" than small farms. This report indicates that 0,5% of the farmers earned 4% of the total incomes, 6,66% earned 28% of the incomes while the bottom 50% earned only 15% of all incomes. (Stadler, 1976:4).

The productiveness of the individual enterprises in the different size categories is not indicated in such figures. The fact that the number of farming units declined over this period from 105 859 in 1960 to 71 621 in 1978 (Stavrou, 1986:8), however, indicates that many were not able remain in business and had sold up. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the extent of state assistance for the less productive farmers in general had decreased phenominally. It also indicates that the interests of the more productive, and probably the larger, farmers had come to dominate in state policy.

2.2.2. Removing excess workers

The shift towards the interests of the more productive farmers can also be seen in the state's policies as regards farm labour that were introduced during this period. In keeping with the state's encouragment of greater mechanisation and concentration, the state's policy of the period became directed towards assisting those rationalising farmers in getting rid of 'excess' workers.

On the level of changing the form of labour and reducing the number of workers on the farms, however, the farmers played the most important role. It was they who decided whether and who to dismiss in their rationalisation drives. This was well described by a worker quoted in Marcus (1986:23).

"The longest that I've been on a farm is four years and eight months. In March I had to leave that farm. Then the farmer says that there are too many of us and he has to pay too much money. He only wants four men. Five must leave. He gives you nothing except the money you earned. Not even food for the road. Then you must be off his property as fast as possible".

The SAAU, in line with their stress on mechanisation, supported the reduction of the number of workers on the farm. In a document, dated 1972, the SAAU said that it

"has always advocated the policy of fulfilling a farm's minimum labour requirements by means of a nucleus of permanent, full-time workers. These should live on the property, be well-trained and well-housed and, of course, paid at rates to compete with the wages offered by other sectors". (20)

There was a move therefore to develop a smaller, stable, on-farm core of workers as full-time, wage labourers. The state involved itself in this by amending the Land and Trust Act of 1936 in 1964. With the new law, the state aimed to limit and abolish

(20) Quoted in Greenberg (1980:96)

labour tenancy in any district by proclamation and aimed to establish control over all farm labour by setting up Labour Control Boards in rural areas. (Morris,1977:54).

The proclamation of a district meant that no new labour tenant contracts could be issued and old contracts could not be renewed. Taking regional differences and the interests of the lesser-capitalised farmers into account, however, this was done only when the majority of farmers in the district agreed. In 1964, 163 103 tenants were registered. In 1970, this had decreased to 27 585 and by 1973 there were no longer any registered labour tenants in the Cape, Orange Free State (O.F.S.) and Transvaal provinces and only 16 350 in Natal. (Ainslie,1973:20). The system was finally abolished nationally by the government only in 1980. (Marcus,1986:146)

Through the proclamation of land the state specified how many workers were allowed on each farm. This system was directly in line with the state's attempts at encouraging mechanisation. Cooper (1986:2) says that the numbers of workers that were specified were

"generous enough for mechanised production, but were designed to enforce production based on wage labour on all farms, ending tenancy agreements and squatting, which still persisted on less-capitalised farms."

Furthermore, the lingering of the tenancy system is indicative of the fact that while the state, the SAAU and the more productive farmers wanted a transition to a smaller on-farm core of wage

workers, there remained a large grouping of farmers who did not make the shift to employing wage labour for whatever reason, financial or otherwise.

These proclamations worked in conjunction with the converted Labour Control Boards. According to Marcus (1986:148) the Boards were used in co-operation with the labour bureaux as the means

"by which 'surpluses' could be pinpointed and action taken on them. ...linked to a broader policy on African people who came to be termed 'non-productive Bantu' - namely, their forced relocation into the Bantustans."

By 1972, there were 35 of these Boards in Natal, 60 in the Transvaal, 60 in the O.F.S. and 33 in the Cape (Marcus,1986:148). There were also 9 regional, 416 local, 405 district, 7 territorial and 296 tribal labour bureaux in the same year. (Ainslie,1973:21)

The combination of these measures therefore meant that the 'rationalising' farmer could expel 'surplus' labour tenants, and the labour control boards, using the various influx and pass laws, and police if neccessary, would force these workers into the bantustans or elsewhere. The actual number of people that have been expelled from the white farms is impossible to know precisely but various estimates have been made.

Nattrass (21) says that "between 1950 and 1970, one and a half million blacks left the capitalist farming sector".

(21) Cited in Stavrou (1987:6)

While again in Stavrou, (1987:6)

"between 1974 and 1980, official statistics show that the number of black farm labourers employed in commercial agriculture, decreased by an average of 3,02 percent per annum".

2.2.3. Variations in the Western Cape

In the Western and central Cape, there was a variation in the way in which the number of farm workers, who were all already employed as wage labourers, were cut down in the process of rationalisation. This was due to the operation of the 'Coloured Labour Preference Policy' which was first elaborated in 1955 by Dr W.W. Eiselen, then Secretary for Native Affairs. According to the Surplus Peoples' Project (SPP) (Volume 3,1983:15) the government planned with this policy to

"remove foreign Africans, 'freeze' the existing position as regards families, to send all women and children who did not qualify to the reserves - only contract migrant workers would be admitted. ...The aim of the policy was to decrease the number of Africans working in the Western Cape by 5% p.a."

The Policy did not initially get much attention but during the 1960's and especially after it was revised in 1967, when it importantly included agricultural employment as well, it affected many more African people. Wilson (22) says that the African population of Cape Town increased from 100 000 to 110 000 people

(22) Cited in SPP (Volume3,1983:15)

between 1960 and 1970. This meant the African proportion of the total population decreased from 10% to 8%.

This process was directly in line with the government's policy of creating the bantustans and it was able to be used by the rationalising farmers to reduce labour.

It also meant that

"in conditions where there was a steady and absolute decline in agricultural employment, especially since the decade of the 70's, "coloured" employment in the Cape actually increased" (Marcus,1986:154).

This relative advantage for the coloured workers did not mean that they benefitted unequivocally. Lipton, (1975:8) referring to the Agricultural census of 1968/69, says that the average wage of 'black regulars' was R135 per annum, for 'coloured regulars', it was R247 per annum, while for whites (one percent of employees) wages were R1691 per annum. It can be seen from this then that although the process of expelling 'excess' African workers in the Western Cape did work to the advantage of coloured workers, it did not mean that they escaped "a low standard of living and, indeed, widespread poverty" (Marcus,1986:155).

2.2.4. Changing Characteristics of Workers

On a national level, including the Cape, the increased mechanisation and the shift towards the small on-farm core and larger migrant labour force influenced a number of changes on those farms that were capitalising. As the production process

became more technical, the farmers invested more capital in it and greater quantities of a higher quality product were demanded, I would argue that the farmers wanted to obtain more control over that process. This had already happened to a certain extent by virtue of the type of machinery introduced which had taken aspects of the workers' control away. Farmers' control was further enhanced by changes in employment practices and the characteristics of the workers that the farmers employed.

1) **Individualising workers**(23) : The majority of farm workers was increasingly being hired on an individual basis. Different 'types' of workers came to be individually employed. On the one hand, the bulk of the farmworkers that came to be employed were migrant and casual workers living in overcrowded bantustans (24). In this case, Marcus (1986:163) says,

"Workers are treated as single labour units to be used and disposed of at the farmer's convenience. They are divorced from any social context, without regard to their social reproduction".

On the other hand, there was also a move towards employing individually the labour of the 'permanent' workers' family. Generally, on farms, there was and remains the expectation from the farmers that the family of the 'permanent' worker would be

23. The term individualisation is useful in describing a process whereby farmers atomise workers, separating them from either their family unit or their 'gang', in order to gain greater control over each worker and increase each worker's productivity. I discuss the individualisation of workers in Elgin in depth in Chapter Six.

(24) See Marcus (1986:162-63), and Cooper (1988:64-66)

available to work on the farm. In the past this labour was not paid for. According to Marcus (1986:164), however, conditions changed such that it was increasingly expected that those workers would be paid and be paid individually.

This individualisation of workers meant that the farmers' control over each individual worker's labour was enhanced. In the past, women and children, for example, were hired as part of a family unit under the control of the 'household head'. Under the new conditions, hiring workers individually meant that each worker was now ostensibly under the direct control of the farmer or a person appointed by him rather than of head of the worker's family.

Linked to this was another process of dividing the workers into 'full-time' and 'part-time' employees. There developed a number of different categories - permanent, casual and seasonal. Permanent workers were generally male workers, considered to be living and working on the farms on a permanent basis. In the Western Cape, these were generally coloured workers. Casual workers are, theoretically, hired on a daily or weekly basis as needed and seasonal workers are employed for the harvest or other seasons (Cooper, 1988:64). Different researchers have used these terms differently, however, so it is difficult to determine the extent of this process, which was essentially the casualisation of the work force.

There were nevertheless two groups of workers that were most directly affected by this: migrant workers, both men and women

(from the bantustans and the rural towns), and the women and children who were the dependants of the permanent workers on the farms. Migrants, even though they may have been employed for 12-month contracts, were still considered not permanent and women and children on the farms, even though they may have worked through out the year, they were classified as 'casual'. Thus even though they were permanent workers, they were paid as casual workers.

The individualisation of workers therefore not only enabled farmers to extend their control over the labour process, but, according to Marcus (1986:176),

"has facilitated farmers' efforts to reduce costs and their dependence on black labour by only taking on workers they need, as they need them. On the other hand, it has made possible the more intense exploitation of those they do employ."

2) **Skill and authority structures:** A second change that occurred during this phase, as a result of the extent and type of machinery introduced, was the beginning of the development of a more formal skill and authority hierarchy on the farms. Training mainly focused on the use and maintenance of machinery and was developed by companies which sold tractors and other machinery.

Other courses were also developed by the S.A. Sugar Association and other farmers' associations and by State Agricultural Stations. During this period there were only two training centres

for farmworkers nationally; Boskop Training Centre; the only one in existence for African workers; and Kromme Rhee for 'coloured' workers (Marcus, 1986:204). Further, elementary training of general labourers did begin on some farms. In Elgin, for example, a film was made, in the 1960's, instructing workers on how to pick apples without bruising them (25).

Skills training, however, only occurred for 'permanent' male workers. What this meant was that the skills of migrants, women and children were generally not only ignored but, as Marcus (1986:215) says, "they (those workers) are also systematically disadvantaged in both training and pay". An extra development that emerged out of this training was that there developed a skill hierarchy and divisions amongst the workers related to this hierarchy.

This hierarchy was directly linked to the development of a new and more elaborate authority structure. Whereas in the past, farmers controlled and organised every aspect of the production process, Marcus (1986:211) asserts that a tendency began for

"black workers to do most first-line supervision, often more skilled coordination, and even general management tasks as "gang leaders", "boss boys" or "indunas".

As with other skills on the farms, there was very little formal training for this role as workers in these positions were

(25) Kilpin (1989), the past chairperson of the Elgin Community Development Association (see Chapter 4) said, in my interview with him, that his father, a farmer, had been involved in the making of the film.

generally chosen in respect of their record of "responsibility, reliability and most importantly loyalty to the establishment" (Marcus, 1986:211).

2.2.5. Changing Forms of Labour Control

I explained that in the 1945-60's phase a very important part of the labour practices was the myriad of laws that directed workers to the farms. During the 1965-75 period, however, because of the changed labour needs of farmers due to mechanisation and the changing labour form, the threat of dismissal or eviction, and their actual eviction, increasingly became the basis of the labour control methods, even on those farms that didn't rationalise.(26).

The vulnerability of workers in this situation of decreasing access to jobs on the farms (for which their passes had been signed) and decreasing access to land in the bantustans (where they would generally have to go if evicted) meant, according to Marcus (1986:160) that farmers

"callously victimised workers on the slightest pretext. If they are old and unable to find a family member to replace them on the farm; if the worker has been ill, becomes infirm

(26) This must be seen in the context of the declining ability of the bantustan areas to support the increased population that was being forced upon them. Nattrass (1988:113) says that between 1936 and 1975 the population in the 'Black rural areas' almost trebled. She illustrated the deteriorating conditions in the bantustans by referring to KwaZulu which in 1957-59 could provide for 38% of its cereal needs and 60% of its meat requirements. By 1971-73, however, it could only provide for 30% of its cereal and 33% of its meat requirements.

(whether through injury at work or not) or dies, even where one or all family members are also working on the farm; when children refuse to work on the farm; even when stock dies, or implements are damaged; being "cheeky", "lazy" or sick "too often" - all have proved to be sufficient grounds for farmers to lay off workers and their families".

The extreme brutality, that I discussed in the 1945 to the mid-1960's phase, accompanied these evictions and was characteristic of control methods on a national level (Ainslie,1973:32).

In the Western Cape, though, there was a variation to this general situation again. The brutality of farmers was also common in this area but it was aggravated because of the dop system (27). With workers in a state of semi-drunkenness the farmers more easily resorted to brutality to coerce workers into working or fulfilling their wishes in other respects.

But the dop system also had a 'motivating' effect. Ainslie (1973:35) says that, because of the addictive nature of alcohol, "(F)armers disingenuously argue that labourers' 'work better' on tots" and that is why they use the system.

Also in the Western Cape, during this phase, there were some farmers who began introducing more co-optive control measures. In the late 1960's and early 1970's the workers had begun leaving

(27) Under the 'dop system' farmworkers were given a number of 'tots', actually a jam-tin full, of wine at different stages during the day. This system is decreasing in popularity amongst farmers. (see Scharf,1984:Chapter 5)

the farms for more attractive conditions in the towns (28). The 'Coloured Labour Preference' policy had meant that there was a relatively higher demand for workers in the area because the African workers had been moved out.

So, some farmers set about improving workers' conditions in an attempt to encourage these workers to remain on the farms. Houses were improved, social workers were employed and relatively higher wages were paid. More importantly, these farmers began focusing on increasing the productivity of workers. This meant that elementary training of workers began (as I discussed earlier) but it also meant that these farmers stopped using the dop-system as a form of control.

A worker in Schärf (1984:195) explained the effect of the dop-system on workers' efficiency and aspirations.

"If a man wants to build himself up and go forward, and he works well, and he says to the farmer: 'Boss, why don't we do it this way'. Then the boss says to him: 'Oh, my boy, you are so clever'. And when it's knock-off time, then the boss says: 'You, come here' my boy, let me give you something to joke about if you're so clever'. And he gives the man a 'tot' and he gives the man another 'tot'. And the man says: 'Your health, boss'. And the boss says: 'This boy is a clever one, let me give him another tot'. And the man says: 'Your health, boss', and he drinks. Soon, the man wakes up

(28) In 1970, coloured farmworkers' wages were R247 per annum, R20.60 per month (Lipton, 1975:8) while wages for coloured workers in manufacturing was R73.60 a month and in construction R109.60 per month. (Ainslie, 1973:35)

to find that he's a baboon" (29).

The farmers had previously desired a poorly-skilled workforce, and so used the dop-system to depress workers' initiative to look for work elsewhere. By contrast, the rationalising, co-optive farmers in the 1965-75 period aimed rather to employ more efficient workers and the dop-system did not encourage this efficiency. For this reason, among others, the farmers changed the control methods on those farms (30).

This phase, from 1965-1975, was characterised by increasing mechanisation and the removal of 'excess' workers off the farms. The aim of the SAAU, the rationalising farmers, and the state, was to improve the productivity of production through increasing the use of machinery and changing the form of labour to a smaller, waged, full-time and resident labour force with a ready supply of casual labour in the form of women and children resident on the farm and migrant workers in the 'reserves' and rural towns.

This aim was partially fulfilled during this phase in that with the help of the state, there had been vast consolidation of land,

(29) Original: "As 'n man 'n slag iets wil upbou en voorentoe kom, en hy werk goed, en hy sê virrie Boer: 'Baas, hoekom doen ons dit nie so nie'. Dan sê die baas vir hom: 'O, my klong, jou hou jou slim'. En as ons tshaila, dan sê die baas: 'Jy, kom hier, my klong, laat ek jou iets gek as jy so slim is'. En hy gee die man 'n dop en hy gee die man nogga dop. En die man sê: 'Gesondheid baas'. En die Boer sê: 'Die klong is 'n slimjan, laat ek hom nog 'n dop gee'. En die man sê: 'Gesondheid baas', en hy drink. Die ander oggend, die man skrik wakker, en hy's 'n bobbajaan".

(30) This will be discussed further in Chapter Four.

a great increase in mechanisation. With this came a large improvement in productivity and output and a shift, on a large number of the farms, to the employment of wage labour, judging from the number of workers that had been evicted.

As far as labour control is concerned, it had become focussed on the farm with the farmer as the main player in the context of diminishing access to land in the bantustans, increasing unemployment and the increasing possibilities of eviction even on those farms that did not rationalise.

2.3. The post 1975 Phase

The problems faced by farmers in the post-1975 phase emerged out of a contradiction that had developed in the earlier 1965-75 phase. Marcus (1986:202) says that this contradiction is

"inherent... in relations where capital-intensive production is built on an oppressed, extensively forced, low waged, and structurally extensive destabilised labour force. This means that while capital inputs and techniques of production (machines, bio - and chemical technology etc.) demand a workforce that is skilled and stable, in order to maximise productivity (and therefore profits), the terms of national and social oppression, which make the labour base so cheap, militate against its creation. The contradiction expresses itself in a complex way, but is summed up in the problem of quality and the perennial shortage of skilled labour that many farmers face."

The post 1975 phase saw the beginning of a trend to try deal with this contradiction facing farmers. The emphasis for rationalising farmers turned from a focus only on mechanisation to one of improving labour productivity and developing a stable work force. At the same time these farmers continued with their attempts at reducing costs through employing more migrant workers as well as the dependants of the 'permanent' workers.

These changes, however, must be located within the "deep political and economic crisis in the social formation as a whole" (Marcus, 1986:37), and in agriculture in particular, that occurred during this period. The analysis of this crisis is made in terms of classical economic principles because, as De Klerk (1990,1) says,

"(T)hough Marx's notion of profit may differ from conventional accounting measures, it is in terms of the latter that one is usually obliged to assess the process of accumulation of capitalist firms - the data needed to do it by any other method are not often available."

2.3.1. The Economic and Political Crisis of the mid-1980's

1) **The Economic Crisis:** For farmers in general, the economic crisis meant that their debt nationally, "increased from just below R2bn at the end of 1975 to more than R11bn at the end of 1986" (31) and increased to 14bn at the end of 1989. (Finance

(31) Du Plessis, Minister of Finance, reported in Business Day, 17/03/88.

Week, 11/01/90)

This debt gives us an indication of the level of the crisis in agriculture. The debt comes from a variety of sources. De Klerk (1990:8) groups the causes of the crisis into three categories- drought; interest rates; and the deterioration of agriculture's terms of trade, especially with industry.

During 1982-1985, there was a prolonged drought in the summer rainfall region. The most immediate effect of drought is on farming income and so farmers immediately seek cash to build up their current assets for the next season. De Klerk (1990:9) says that drought accounts for a substantial part of the steep rise in debt in 1983-1984 while the State President's Economic Advisory Council (SPEAC) (32) estimated that only 22% of the increase in farming debt between 1980-1985 can be directly ascribed to drought.

The second factor adding to the debt burden is interest rates. Nominal interest rates increased most rapidly between 1980-1982; from 8.4% to 13.6%. This was before the drought. Since then, however, the interest rate has remained at a high level. There was, therefore, a coincidence of the period of high interest rates and drought and this meant, according to De Klerk (ibid.), that

"(B)earing in mind that the drought made it necessary to 'consolidate' much of the sector's short-term debt, the effect of high interest rates was to compound the growth of

(32) referred to in De Klerk (1990:9).

farming debts at a particularly rapid rate."

The SPEAC attributes 31% of the increase in debt to the rise in interest rates.(ibid.).

De Klerk (1990:10) raises an important further aspect related to the interest rates. During the period in question, the rate of inflation has increased by an even greater rate than the interest rates. This has meant that the real rate of interest has been negative for much of the period. Many farmers have therefore increased rather than decreased the amount they have borrowed. This has been encouraged further by the easy availability of credit from banks and the co-operatives, and by various other subsidies that have been made available.

The third factor, the declining terms of trade, has had the greatest influence on the increase in farmers debt. The terms of trade is the rate at which agricultural goods are exchangeable for those of other sectors especially manufacturing. The SPEAC attributes 47% of the rise in debt to declining terms of trade.

De Klerk (ibid:12) explains that there are several ways in which this rate of exchange is manifested. Firstly, in the domestic terms of trade, or the ratio of farm input to output prices in South Africa. Since 1975, this ratio has declined almost unbrokenly; if the terms of trade were 1:1 in 1975, by 1986 they would have reached a ratio of 1,37:1.

Secondly there is the declining international terms of trade. De Klerk (ibid.) gives rough calculations of the ratio of domestic input to export output prices for wool and maize, South

Africa's two most important export crops. For wool, the ratio fell from 1:1 in 1975 to 1,32:1 in 1986, and for maize it fell from 1:1 in 1975 to 2,09:1 in 1986 despite the boost to the Rand price of farm exports due to the depreciation of the Rand. Thus, De Klerk explains (ibid.), if in 1975 a farmer had had to exchange 1000 bags of maize for a tractor, in 1986 the farmer would have had to supply double the number of bags for the tractor.

What this situation has meant is that many farmers were faced with the prospect of bankruptcy. According to De Klerk (ibid:6), the rule of the thumb for financial health is that total debt should not exceed half the value of total assets. For commercial agriculture as a whole, the sector is still sound. In 1986 and 1987 the average debt burden stood at about 27%.

This being so, however, in 1983, when the total burden was much lower, the SAAU reported that the average debt burden of the 15200 farmers most seriously in debt that year was 50% placing 22,4% of farmers in immediate danger of insolvency. (in ibid.).

It is important to emphasise that the bad state of health is not shared equally by all farmers and by all sub-sectors within commercial agriculture. To fully understand this state of affairs, however, a sub-sectoral break down of the number of small and large farmers who went bankrupt would be necessary, and these figures are seldom available. Nevertheless, there are certain figures available that at least give us a picture of those affected. The sectors worst affected were the summer crops

(concentrated in the Transvaal and Orange Free State) , where 52% were beyond the critical level, followed by winter crops at 22,6%. Important for this study, is that in the Elgin area there were no bankruptcies in the decade of the 1980's. (Personal communication with Hopkirk, a specialist on the area).

Since 1983 the national situation appears to have worsened in that the average interest rate has changed little, the debt burden has grown significantly and the input prices have grown faster than the output prices.(De Klerk, 1990:7).

1b) The State's reaction.: The state's reaction, as regards this economic position of farmers, has been two fold. On the one hand, it has increased its aid to farmers substantially while, on the other hand, in apparent contradiction, it has encouraged farmers to farm without state assistance.

Besides the subsidies that had been available in the 1965-75 period, a number of other measures were introduced specifically to alleviate the extraordinary financial pressures of the 1980's. These included subsidies on

- " - the consolidation of debt (R344 m between 1981 and 1987)
- crop production loans (R470 m between 1981 and 1987)
- interest on consolidated debt and production loans (R90 m between 1981 and 1987 with a further interest subsidy equivalent to 10% of the Land Bank's interest rate on cash credit loans to agricultural co-operatives in respect of carry-over debts approved for 1988-89)

- stock feed loans
- input costs for farmers in drought-stricken areas (R120 m paid to creditors to help farmers to clear production debts incurred in the 1987-88 season)
- the conversion of sub-marginal crop-lands to planted pasture (R280 m budgetted for 1987/88- 1991/92)
- export losses for summer grains, chiefly maize (up to R200m per annum available from 1988)." (ibid:7-8).

In addition, the state stands as guarantor of consolidated debts to the value of R900m.(ibid:8). The effect of these subsidies was made clear by the National Maize Producers' Organisation which estimated that

" at least 40% of South Africa's grain producers would be forced into liquidation if State aid to farmers was summarily withdrawn." (quoted in ibid.)

While it appears from this that the government was again supporting all farmers, the policy of supporting 'viable' farmers remained. In 1987, for example, the government introduced an assistance scheme of R400 million for farmers facing extreme debt problems. But,

"The assistance scheme announced for farmers is not intended to aid all those facing sequestration, but only those with management skills and other characteristics that would make a success of farming." (33)

So, of the 140 farmers who had applied by August 1987,

(33) Wentzel in Business Day, 09/06/87

"only one third had fallen within the criteria for debt consolidation and state help. The debt burden of the remaining 66 percent was so large their position was beyond meaningful help" (34).

Another indication of this was that in 1983/84, the years when the drought was most severe, of the 2576 farmers who applied to the Department of Agriculture for assistance with the discharge of debts only 1377 were granted assistance- at an average of R59 677 each. (Department of Agriculture Annual Report, 1 April 1983-31 March 1984). In 1986/87 of the 2298 who applied, only 827 received an average of R73 230, while in 1988/89 1094 applied and 556 received an average of R100 006. (Departement van Landbou Ontwikkeling, Annual Report 1 April 1989-31 March 1990)

In an apparent contradiction the second reaction of the state was to begin to stress the importance to farmers of production without state assistance and interference. Greyling Wentzel, ex-minister of Agriculture, said at an Orange Free State Agricultural Union meeting in 1987 that

"In conforming with the government's policy of a free market economy, producers would find increasingly they would have to stand on their own feet" (Daily Dispatch, 28/10/87).

This was stated more clearly in the 1984 government White Paper on Agricultural Policy where it was stated that

" since the Government advocates the principles of the free-market system, the control board system needs to be applied

(34) Van Niekerk, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, in E.P. Herald, 25/08/87

with great circumspection to ensure that State involvement does not distort production, marketing and price structures" (WPM.84)

De Klerk (1990:11) suggests that the effect of the low real interest rate, that has been aggravated by state assistance, has been one of the main reasons for this shift in state policy. As I have said the low real interest rate has encouraged farmers to borrow more and more. This has resulted in

"relatively unstable and unproductive forms of investment which, along with changes in the terms of trade ..., have eroded the fundamental profitability of agricultural production and, with it, the sector's capacity to generate surplus for accumulation." (ibid.)

It is in this economic context that the change of emphasis on farms must be understood. Farmers were increasingly being urged to rely on their own resources and so those farmers that were searching for ways of rationalising the production process have turned inward and looked for ways of reducing inputs while maintaining or improving the level of output. For this reason then, cutting costs and methods of improving productivity have become the focus of these farmers' attempts at getting out of their present economic crisis.

2) The Political Crisis. The emphasis on labour productivity and developing a stable labour force has also to be located in the political crisis and the increased level of resistance of the

working class as a whole in South Africa during this phase. Beginning in the early 1970's, workers and students especially began developing organisations. This organised resistance grew through the 1970's and 1980's and included the formation of mass structures in the form of the United Democratic Front (UDF), the Azanian Peoples Organisation (AZAPO), the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the National Council Of Trade Unions (NACTU) and others. Importantly, there are various workers' union initiatives to specifically organise farmworkers. The most important of these are the Farm Workers Project of the Food and Allied Workers Union, a COSATU affiliate, and the National Union of Farmworkers, a NACTU affiliate (Cooper, 1988:80).

Farmers have reacted warily to the threat of workers' unions, while at the same time they have emphasised the need to prepare for unions to safeguard their interests. Jooste, the 1988/89 chairperson of the SAAU, said that

"The farmers of South Africa must ensure that their workers are satisfied with their work and living conditions so as to work against the threatened inflow of trade unions into agriculture, which could lead to wage demands of millions of rands and a high scale of retrenchments" (35).

Also in 1989, Nico Kotze, the 1989 chairperson of the SAAU and

(35) Original: "Die boere van Suid Afrika moet sorg dat hul werkers tevrede is met hul werk - en lewens omstandighede om so doende die dreigende invloed van vakbonde in die landbou, wat kan lei tot looneise van miljoene rande en groot skaalse afdankings, teen te werk." (Kobus Jooste, chairperson of the SAAU in 1988/9, reported in Die Burger, 21/10/89)

member of the Board of Directors of the RF, said, that

"Service conditions, housing establishments, work contracts, leave, training, provisions and so forth must be looked at. He believes that the formation of workers' committees on farms, which negotiate for the workers with the employer, can perform the task of the trade union." (36)

2.3.2. Training and Community Development

I have outlined the broad economic and political problems facing farmers. It is in this context that the focus for rationalising farmers shifted towards trying to reduce costs and improve the productivity of workers. They have tried to do this in various ways, through training workers, improving wages and incentives and through community development.

The government's policies as regards workers have also changed. There has been a shift away from the concentration on influx control and other extra-economic measures. In June 1986, the Abolition of Influx Control Act was enacted. This provided for the total or partial repeal of 34 laws, and for the amendment of three others (37). Further the coloured labour preference policy was scrapped in 1984 (Race Relations Survey for 1984:347). The scrapping of these policies of the government was due

(36) Original: "Daar moet gekyk word na diensvoorwaarders, huis vestiging, werk kontrakte, verlof, opleiding, vergoeding, en so meer. Hy glo dat die stigting van werkerskomitees op plase, wat namens die werkers met die werkgewer onderhandel, die taak van vakbonde kan verrig." (Nico Kotze, chairperson of the SAAU 1989/90, reported in Die Burger, 21/10/89)

(37) For discussion of these various changes to the control of African people see Race Relations Survey for 1986:339-345.

to the fact that working class people increasingly resisted these laws as the possibilities for survival in the bantustans deteriorated still further and, according to the President's Council, were "flocking to the urban areas to earn a living"(38).

The shift in government policy on agriculture was reflected in its "White paper on the Agricultural Policy" in 1984 referred to earlier. In this paper, the government stated in the "Goals of Agricultural Policy" section that

"The maintenance of sound labour relations, the enhancement of the level of skill of workers, efficient use of labour, and social protection measures are important factors that contribute towards the optimum use of labour. Improving the quality of labour employed in agriculture is an essential aim in the protection of farming productivity. This applies to the farmer as the entrepreneur and manager as well as to all the hired help" (WPM - 84).

The agricultural unions and other organisations, like the Rural Foundation, have also been encouraging training. Lance Turvey, the chairperson of the Kranskop Farmers' Association, said for example,

"We must improve the quality of our training. You've got some good people on your farms - they can be trained" (39).

While at Boskop Training Centre,

"The number of students increased as the farmers became

(38) Discussed in Race Relations Survey for 1986:336-337.

(39) Reported in the Natal Witness 21/10/89.

aware of the value of the training courses, a better motivated and more responsible farm-hand. During the first eight months of 1985, 1766 farm-hands were trained compared to 1034 during the corresponding period in 1984. This represents an increase of 70 percent in the number of people trained" (Informa, March 1986:12)

In 1989, in line with this emphasis on training, the Western Cape Agricultural Union, in co-operation with the Rural Foundation and the National Productivity Institute (NPI) (40) produced a 'Training Directory for Agriculture in the Western Cape'. The Directory listed all the agencies and institutions that can be approached by farmers for assistance in:

1. Management training
2. Secretarial training
3. Production-related training
4. Computer training
5. Community Development
6. Training for co-operatives
7. Productivity
8. Safety and Loss Control
9. Security

Malan, president of the Western Cape Agricultural Union, wrote the Foreword for the Directory. According to him, the production of the directory must be seen as one of the most important actions to date in achieving the objectives of training, namely, to

(40) See Chapter Five for a discussion of the NPI

"- improve farmers' attitudes towards training and also raise their level of management,
- improve healthy work relationships between the farmer and his workers,
- improve the knowledge, insight and skills of the workers" (1989:i).

In respect of workers' living conditions, a delegation from the SAAU approached the Minister of Manpower in 1988, saying that

"the time is ripe for a completely new approach by government to the problem of housing for farm labourers...

The R10m which the Directorate of Financial Assistance made available in loans to farmers for the erection of houses contrasted starkly with the R700m granted the National Housing Scheme during 1987/88 financial year, it stated" (in Business Day, 04/04/88).

In response to this, Jacob De Villiers, Minister of Agriculture, said at the annual general meeting of the SAAU in October 1989 that,

"farmers will in future receive greater assistance from the government for the housing of labourers. ...housing for labourers would become part of the overall plan for housing in South Africa" (in Natal Witness, 21/10/89).

As I said earlier the government supplies a five-eighths subsidy on each house and loans at an interest of 5% per annum. In 1982/83 482 farmers applied for assistance totalling R8 139 080. Of these, 464 received assistance of R7 675 940 which is an

average of R16 542 per farmer.(Department of Agriculture Annual Report,1 April 1983-31 March 1984)'. In 1987/88, 720 farmers applied, 694 received assistance totalling R19 198 526, an average of R27 663 per farmer.(Departement van Landbou Ontwikkeling, Annual Report 1 April 1989-31 March 1990).

Despite the possible lack of government assistance for workers' housing, farmers are themselves spending more money on the housing of workers. In 1987, on the 2 107 member farms of the Rural Foundation, for example, 2,94 million rand was spent on housing. In 1989, on the 3 338 member farms the amount had increased to 23,8 million rand (41); a percentage increase of 418% not taking inflation into account. While this is a large overall increase it is important to note that the average amount spent per farm, in 1989, was merely R7 130. Nevertheless, the percentage increase shows the present change of emphasis.

Another point to note is that the RF members have generally joined the organisation because they see the importance, for them, of community development. I would argue that it could be expected that RF members would have spent more on improvements to workers' conditions on their farms. They are, therefore, not representative of all farmers but they do represent a new concern amongst farmers.

As regards the education of farm children, there have also been changes, linked to the changes more broadly on the education.

(41) Rural Foundation Annual report (1988/89:14 and 17).

front. This is because they fall under the control of the Department of Education and Training. In 1979, the Education and Training Act was passed. This provided for, amongst other things,

"the introduction of compulsory education (and) free tuition including free school books" (Gaganakis and Crewe, 1987:34)

In 1983, the government published a White Paper in which it recommended that,

"- farm schools should be established on a centralised basis, but where large isolated areas have to be served, it is still necessary to fund one-man schools.

- The subsidy (for the building of classrooms) should be continued, and free textbooks and equipment should be supplied.

- Inspectors should be appointed for farm schools to carry out upgrading programmes which should include remedial teaching and a class library scheme." (42).

Then in 1988, the 1979 Act was amended to allow for, amongst other things, the establishment of 'combined' schools (schools up to standard seven) in these areas with few pupils (43).

Finally in 1983 the government began funding the Rural Foundation (RF) and this has continued to the present. I look at the RF in-depth in the next chapter but it is important to point out here that it is part of a combined initiative of both the government and the SAAU to "uplift" the living and working conditions of

(42) White Paper on the Provision of Education in South Africa, 1983, quoted in Gaganakis and Crewe (1987:37)

(43) See Race Relations Survey for 1988/89:267-268

farm workers. The focus of the RF's activities is encouraging training of the workers, community development and improving the relationship between farmers and workers.

Although the government's contribution to the RF in 1988/89 was only R6,9 million (RF annual report, 1988/89:10), it represents the changing trend of the government's involvement in agriculture.

The profitability problems faced by the farmers during this phase emerge out of the contradiction that exists with a capital intensive production process and an unskilled, low-wage workforce. It has resulted in a high debt burden which has been aggravated by the drought, high interest rates, and declining terms of trade especially with industry. The aim of the farmers and the government has, therefore, increasingly shifted towards trying to counter-act this contradiction by developing a more highly skilled, waged, efficient and stable workforce. As stated, they have tried to do this through improving workers' skills and supervisory techniques, increasing wages and incentives and through upgrading workers' living conditions.

Further, although I discuss it in-depth in Chapter Six, it is important to state here that a change of emphasis of labour control methods has accompanied the present aim of the farmers. Control has become even more located on the farm and it has also seen a shift towards encouraging workers' consent in production and their allegiance to the enterprise.

This historical focus is important in the attempt to understand the meaning of changes that have occurred on some farms in Elgin. Firstly, the historical focus showed that the dynamics of social relationships on the farms must be located in the context of the profitability problems that farmers face at the time.

Secondly, a study of the history shows that methods of labour control are continually changing and are themselves directly linked to the profitability problems of the farmers. Thirdly, a study of the history of the third phase illuminated the broader context of the profitability problems facing farmers as well as the main ways in which farmers are trying to solve their present crisis. Three fields of change are identified - the improvement of training, wages and incentives and community development for workers - and are discussed in detail, as occurring on the four farms in the sample, in chapters Five and Six.

Finally, this historical perspective makes it clear that the four farms that the study focuses on, are not representative of agriculture in general in South Africa. The characteristics of Elgin are discussed further in chapter four. It is important to say here that the relatively good natural conditions, the fact that the product of farming is mostly exported profitably, and that the debt burden of farmers in the area generally is not as great as the maize farmers in the Western Transvaal, for example, distinguishes the area from most other farming areas in the country and puts the Elgin farmers amongst the most productive in the country.

CHAPTER THREE

THE FOUNDATION FOR RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

It is apparent that the government and organised agricultural capital have increasingly involved themselves in workers' living conditions, as well as in attempts to increase their productivity in the 1980's. Training of workers, improving the basic education of workers, improving the quality of worker housing have all been encouraged by the farmers' organisations and the government.

In December 1982, the government and the South African Agricultural Union (SAAU) were instrumental in the formation of the Rural Foundation. The stated aim of the Rural Foundation was

"to involve organised agriculture as well as ... the private and public sectors in promoting rural community development to improve the quality of life and living standards of approximately 7 million people on farms in South Africa." (Rural Foundation Annual Report, 1989:1)

The initiatives of the Rural Foundation in Elgin in general and on the four farms that I visited in particular, were important, especially in the field of community development. It also influenced developments in other spheres as I outline in Chapter Four and Five. In order to facilitate an understanding of the Rural Foundation's view of the relationship between community development and productivity I present here a national view of the Rural Foundation, its history, structure, operation, financing and its philosophy.

3.1. Rural Foundation History

In 1974, a student welfare group, the Universiteit van Stellenboschse Klinieke Organisasie (USKOR), at the University of Stellenbosch targeted farmworkers as an important group of people that needed community development. These students' initial attempts involved missionary work on Sundays. However, they found farmworkers were often drunk and "there was not really any kind of opportunity for discussion" (Bosman, 1986). As a result they started arranging film evenings and sports days on the Saturdays, which Bosman (1986) said, "helped us to get communication going between us who were students; who were white; who were educated; who were ...more privileged", and the farmworkers. "And that, I think was a very small beginning in this whole process of just getting communication going".

At the same time there were other groups working on the farms in the Stellenbosch district and elsewhere, trying to help farmworkers deal with the effects of the 'dop system'. Of importance in this respect were the Child Welfare Society and the South African National Cancer Association (SANCA). These various groupings began co-operating with each other during the 1970's. In 1980 they began meeting together in the Forum of Rural Community Development.

The basic philosophy of this Forum was that

"the farmer should combine the humanistic element with economics; that communication is very important. They stres-

sed cooperation rather than conflict" (1)

Although this forum focussed their activities on the Stellenbosch area, soon farmers in other areas started urging the Forum to come to their farms. With the expansion of the Forum's activities increased funds were needed, and there was a need to co-ordinate the very diverse activities occurring on farms. Okkie Bosman was therefore mandated to approach the government and organised agriculture for support and funding. (Calvert, 1989)

The outcome of the Forum's negotiations with the two groupings was that the SAAU would take over the project as its initiative while the government would fund the project as part of its Population Development Programme. As a combined state and capital initiative, the Forum's work was taken over and the Rural Foundation for Community Development was formed.

The Rural Foundation was then the outcome and consolidation of the activities of a number of people and organisations that had been involved in community development projects on the farms in the Western Cape for a number of years. It emerged, however, as an initiative of the Western Cape Agricultural Union (WCAU) and was taken over as "the organ of organised agriculture at a national level" (SAAU Annual Report of the Manpower Committee 1983/4).

The Rural Foundation itself began operating only in the Western Cape in 1983. Besides the fact that the organisation originated

(1) This information came from notes of a talk given by Calvert in 1983

in the Western Cape, it was decided to start the projects in those areas with a high concentration of people on the farms (labour intensive farming areas - as typified by Western Cape agriculture. This was considered to be more economical. Bosman (1986) pointed out that

"We, right in the beginning, asked ourselves the question, if we want to be effective in agriculture do we start off in, say, Beaufort West or Upington, where the chance of success is very, very small. Or do we start off in Stellenbosch, or Elgin or Paarl, where the chances of success are very big ?"

I would argue that this decision was also motivated by the fact that development programmes had already begun in the Western Cape. These programmes had been started because firstly the farmers in the Western Cape are generally wealthier than farmers in other areas in the country as a great deal of the produce is exported (see Chapter Four); and secondly, because the produce is exported, they are directly affected by trade boycotts. Thus on the one hand the farmers could afford to invest money into community development and on the other hand, they had very definite interests in community development. (2)

The Rural Foundation's operations have since broadened out so that there are now eleven regions nationally: two in the Transvaal, two in the Orange Free State, one in the Northern

(2) This link between community development and trade boycotts will be discussed in Chapter Five.

Cape; one in the Eastern Cape, one in the Southern Cape, and four in the Western Cape. (Rural Foundation Annual Report, 1988). The Western Cape is therefore still the core of the Rural Foundation's operations.

3.2. Organisational Structure of the Rural Foundation.

The combination of government and capital is reflected in the control and management of the organisation. The SAAU has appointed two of its members to the Board of directors of the Rural Foundation: F. Malan (who is chairperson of the Board and chairperson of the WCAU) and N. Kotze (previously President of the Transvaal Agricultural Union (TAU), but was elected President of SAAU in 1989). J. Schoeman was appointed by the Department of National Health and Population Development to represent it on the Board. Other representatives on the Board of directors are J. Coetzee, vice-chairperson and representative of a number of private companies' interests, and J. van der Merwe, who is the representative of the Community Development Associations (the local Rural Foundation structures). O. Bosman, the general manager, and P. Bosman, the accountant are the other two members of the Board.

According to Bosman (1986), the various groupings needed to be represented on the Board for the following reasons,

"We don't think that it is right that the farming community should, on their own, raise all the capital to do this development work. We also do not think that it is feasible that the state on their own would be effective on coming

onto farms to change the lives of people. And we do not think that it is viable that the private sector on their own come and get programmes going. So we tried to found an organisation with a broad basis, then we can get the fruitful co-operation from all three sectors because we think about the farming community as part of the whole of South Africa."

Bosman is on the Board but is also the general manager of the organisation and it is under his control that the head office in Stellenbosch co-ordinates national activities, finance and training of community developers. In the beginning, there were only two departmental divisions in the organisation: finance and human resources. Over the intervening years, four more departments have been created: Research and Information, Public Relations and a previous operations department which has been divided into two separate departments, namely Social Services, (which deals with the social and recreational aspects of community developers' work), and Management Services (which deals with training, labour relations and other work-related aspects).

Each of the eleven regions has a regional office with a manager. From these offices regional finance, training and problem-solving are co-ordinated. These regional managers control and service the 114 community developers in the field dealing with any problems that the developers might not be able to solve themselves. Then in each area there are between one and three developers who co-ordinate the various programmes and courses which occur on the

farms. On this local level there have also been new posts created. In the past, the developers only dealt with social activities, but now there is often a manpower developer who focuses on training and labour relations. Where there are two more developers in an area, a senior developer is appointed and this person acts as the area manager. This area manager then consults with the regional manager.

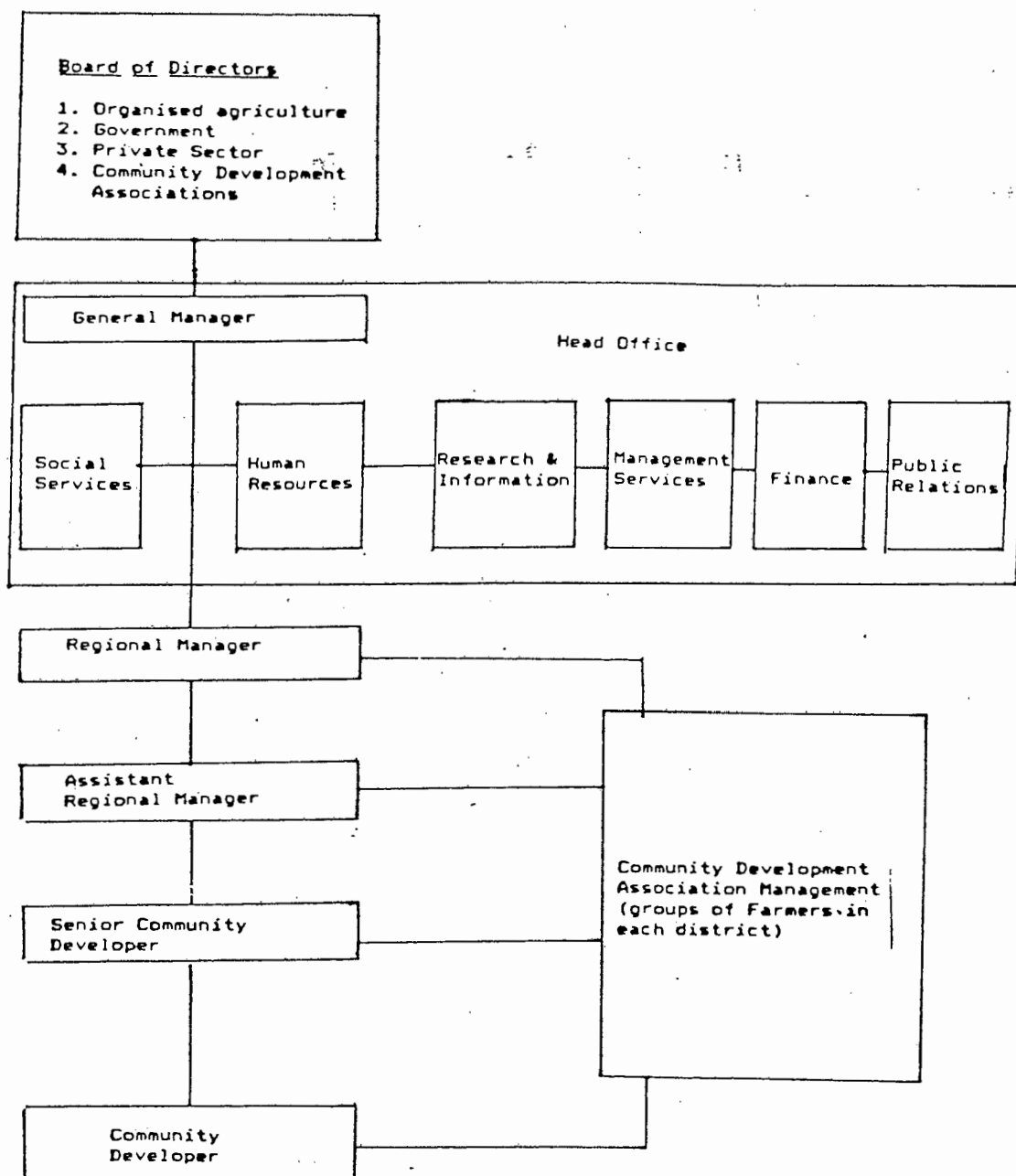
Accountability in the upper levels of the organisation is directly to the general manager. At the area level, however, accountability becomes more complex. This complication arises from the operation of the organisation. When a group of farmers in an area become interested in the Rural Foundation's activities, they form themselves into a community development association (CDA). This CDA then, elects a management committee who, in consultation with the Rural Foundation appoints a community development officer as their employee. This developer then plans and co-ordinates programmes and projects on the member farms in the area, in consultation with the management committee as well as the regional manager of the Rural Foundation. The developers are therefore accountable to both the Rural Foundation and the CDA and although control over the type of projects to be pursued in a particular area remains with the farmers, the Rural Foundation contributes suggestions.

We can see from the structure of the organisation and the manner in which it operates that, although the focus of the activities is farm-workers, it is very clearly an organisation of capital.

Calvert, a private community developer in the Elgin area, explained clearly this allegiance to capital:

"I mean, they assist the farmers at the moment, how to negotiate with the unions. So they've already said: "We're on the side of the farmers." (Calvert,1989)

Diagram 3.1. The organisational structure of the Rural Foundation



3.3. Funding Structure of the Rural Foundation.

The Rural Foundation pays seventy five percent of the cost of each developer's services, while each local CDA pays the remaining 25 percent raised from the membership fees of each farmer. The budget for each community developer in the 1988 financial year was R57 237. The Rural Foundation therefore paid R42 928 of each developer's salary while the farmers paid R14 309. Each member farmer contributes in relation to the number of families serviced by the community developer in their CDA. For example, if there are 100 families in a particular CDA, each farmer's contribution is R143,09 per family per year.

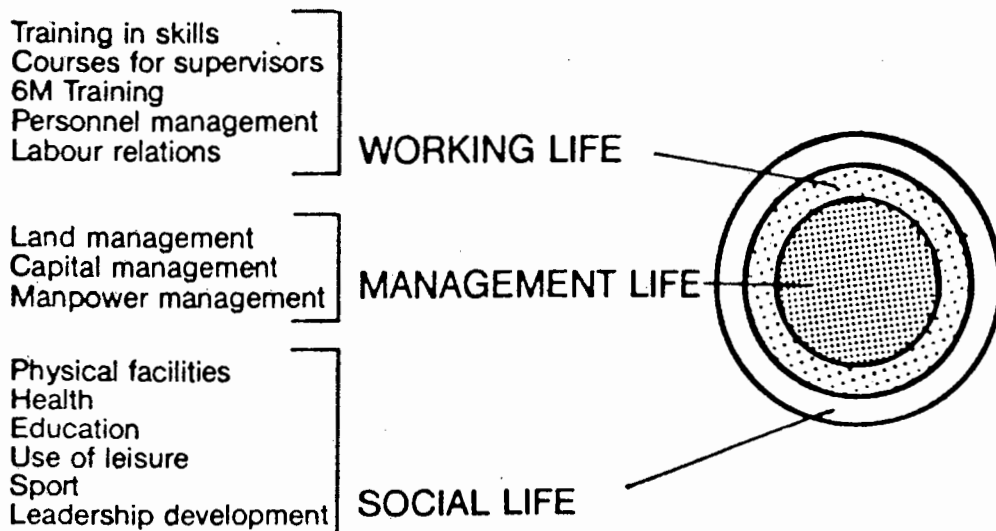
The Rural Foundation is able to bear this financial load because of its large state subsidy: 60% of its income, R6,9 million in 1988. (Rural Foundation Annual Report, 1988/9:10). The money is used for financing the developers and other activities in the field. The running expenses of the head office come solely from private company sponsorship which amounted to R954 000 in 1988 (Rural Foundation Annual Report, 1988/9:24). This was received from, among others, Barlow Rand, Bayer SA, Boeresake Coop, Caltex Oil (SA), Citrus Exchange, Gencor Development Trust, K.W.V., Mercedes Benz (SA), Metropolitan Life, SA Breweries, Sanlam, Boland Bank, First National Bank, Standard Bank, Santam Bank and Volkskas. (Rural Foundation Annual Report, 1988/89:24).

3.4. Philosophy, Aims and Role of the Rural Foundation

The most important aspect of Rural Foundation philosophy and

practice is what Bosman called the link between "people development" and productivity. He said that a study done for the Cape Pomological Society (3) (and made available to the Rural Foundation) indicated that there was a big "difference between effective and ineffective farmers" (Bosman,1986). For example, the profit raised from R100 capital invested was increased from R6.72 to R13.20. Labour cost per hectare per annum was R343 as against R181. Using this study Bosman (1986) said that the Rural Foundation had deduced that "the working people must be developed correctly, they must be utilised correctly, and they must be managed correctly", for productivity to increase. So it was with this basic principle that the Rural Foundation set about 'developing the working people'.

Diagram 3.2. Life on a farm as depicted by the Rural Foundation



Ref: Rural Foundation Annual Report : 1988/89

(3) This study, "Bestuur Benaderings en Praktyke van 'n aantal Vrugte Boere in die Wes-Kaap - 'n Verkenning Studie" ("Management Approaches and Practices of a number of Fruit Farmers in the Western Cape - a pilot study"), was completed in 1982 by Dr D. Gouws, a management consultant.

Bosman (1986) told me that whereas there are organisations that focus only on one aspect of "people development", for example welfare organisations only focus on social aspects, the Rural Foundation says that

"you can only affect the life of a farm when you somehow try to influence all those areas. Otherwise you're creating a skew situation that can only have negative repercussions in the future" .

Bosman (1986) explained these negative repercussions by way of example:

"Quite often people who say the only problem is housing, they only get the farmer to provide better housing for the people. We are seeing many many examples where farmers go out and spend hundreds of thousands of rands on housing; give the keys to the people. After say six months those houses are a mess. They would phone us and say, 'you know I've built a house, I've built a recreation hall with a T.V. I went to Hermanus for the weekend, it's now Monday morning, I want my people to work. They smashed the T.V., they've thrown all the chairs out of the window etc.'. The only question that you ask that kind of person, in that kind of situation would be: 'Did you take the people with you, was there any kind of people development with physical development'. The answers with 90% of the cases would be 'no'."

The Rural Foundation therefore pinpointed ten "dimensions of development" towards successful community development.

These are:

1. Health development: health services and health conditions;
2. Physical development: housing, transport and recreational needs;
3. Educational development: raising general level of education and training of employees - informal and formal education. Increasing management skills;
4. Social/Psychological development: family violence, alcohol abuse, unwanted pregnancies, child neglect, self and community pride;
5. Socio-cultural development: recreational activities;
6. Economic development: ways to obtain money - 1) community and home industries, 2) fund-raising, 3) improved individual wages through increased productivity which would be obtained through better manpower utilisation;
7. Legal development: farm policy, procedures, rules, constitutions and disciplinary codes;
8. Leadership development: community management, club management;
9. Ethical development: sense of responsibility, loyalty, pride in community, trustworthiness;
10. Religious development: liaison with ministers, morning services at work. (Rural Foundation Annual Report, 1984/85:7-9)

The Rural Foundation sees this process as being the development of self-help amongst workers: "Help farmworkers to help themselves" (4). A prerequisite for this self-help is communication.

Bosman (1986) explains that

"the farming community is within, for historical reasons and other reasons, a very strong paternalistic situation, where there used to be very little communication, the farmer is the boss and he runs the show."

In order to try to remedy the problem of lack of communication, the Rural Foundation developed structures such as liaison committees of workers which meet with the farmers, in order "to get a sounder flow of communication going." The farmers then "are much more aware of the knowledge of the workers and because of that much more willing and realistic about delegating responsibility to them." (Bosman,1986)

Then,

"once that process of communication and delegation starts happening, you get the possibility, you get self-image, you get space to start generating your own ideas." (Bosman,1986)

The Rural Foundation's role in this development process is that of facilitator. The specific activities in each area are context-dependent. In those areas that are close to big centres, it seems that the community developers draw in many organisations,

(4) This is the name of Rural Foundation publicity pamphlet.

because of their accessibility. In more remote areas, though, it seems that the developers perform much of the training themselves. Nevertheless, in every area, a particular role and approach is encouraged in the Rural Foundation developers. Bosman (1986) said that

"He mustn't go and do things which he thinks is right. His communication with the community must be very, very good to affect this kind of grassroots activity, to listen to what the people want and what he can do. You sometimes get a situation when for instance people would all like to drive round in motor cars, but it is unrealistic. So you know, to pursue that would only frustrate the people instead of stimulating them. So it's a very thin balance you must learn to establish - what is feasible, what is not feasible, what is community-based and what is either just farmer-based or just community development officer-based. And you can only do that by regular and honest communication amongst all parties."

In reference to the financing of projects and outings from the farms, Bosman (1986) explained how the Rural Foundation hoped this would happen.

"It is very important to have a sound economic basis. Projects must be affordable in such a way that it can sometimes be done without the support of the farmer. I think you enhance tremendously the self-image of people if you have a cut-off point of projects when people can finance what they want to do on their own instead of coming out with nice

projects but it is only feasible if the farmer is willing to subsidise it. We would very much like to see this kind of action more and more happening on it's own without our involvement whatsoever."

Eventually, therefore, the Rural Foundation hopes that the process of communication, as well as the projects and clubs on the farms, will be self-sustaining.

As a facilitator, however, the Rural Foundation sees itself "in a certain sense, as an organisation that can only exist temporarily. After a number of things have happened it is possible that we will vanish". (Bosman,1986)

I have tried to show in this chapter that the Rural Foundation is a farmers' service organisation, supported by the government, and whose activities are directed towards initiating development projects on its member farms. The focus of these projects is the farmworkers and the upgrading of their conditions of life. Underpinning much of the Rural Foundation's work is the perceived link between workers' social situation and their productivity.

With this broad national view of the Rural Foundation, we can now look at the Elgin area to see the context in which the local Rural Foundation association, the Elgin Community Development Association operates and of which the four farms are members.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ELGIN CONTEXT

In examining the Rural Foundation I have focussed on the Elgin area. In this chapter I review the history of fruit farming in the area, the fruit production cycle, changes on the farms that had occurred in the pre -1980's period (1), a look at the present-day situation in the area, the organisations which exist in the area and finally the Elgin Community Development Association (ECDA - the local Rural Foundation structure). This chapter therefore aims to provide the local context within which the changes on the farms in the case study have taken place. Importantly, it shows that, firstly, the Rural Foundation is one of a set of initiatives operating in the area and, secondly, that the Rural Foundation's influence and effect must be located within the history of attempts in the area to develop the workers' conditions of existence and improve their productivity more generally.

4.1. The Elgin Apple-farming region

Apple orchards were already in existence in Elgin by 1907, when it was reported in a newspaper that there were 1 500 apple and 700 'french plum' trees under cultivation on the Oak Valley Farm (Stander,1983:62). This was a small beginning, but it took place within a situation where there already existed a relatively established export fruit industry, mostly dominated by fruit produced on farms owned by Cecil John Rhodes in the Groot Drakenstein Valley near Stellenbosch. From the beginning, therefore,

(1) and therefore, the pre-Rural Foundation period.

although there was a certain market for the fruit on the Johannesburg goldfields, the Elgin fruit was directed towards the export market (Stander,1983).

This orientation towards producing export fruit has had a great effect on the deciduous fruit industry as a whole. Firstly, because of the revenue gained on the high-paying export market, this subsector is highly competitive (2). Secondly, exporting has also had a disadvantage for the industry as it has been affected by sanctions in various ways, some of which I discuss in Chapter Five. Thirdly, because the fruit is sold on the international markets, a high quality is required and this has affected farmers' concerns about the production process.

These attempts to produce high quality fruit for export have in themselves meant that costs of production, packaging and transportation have been very high. During the 1960's and early 1970's, however, the industry experienced a boom and this meant that the high costs were offset against the increased profits. There seems, therefore, to have been little emphasis on cutting costs and increasing yields in that period.

Subsequently, due to increased transport and labour costs, sanctions, the fall in the value of the rand (and therefore increased costs of imported machinery and technology etc.), there has been an increasing emphasis on attempts to cut costs, save labour and increase yields (Jones-Phillipson,NTI,1989).

(2) See later in this chapter.

It is important to note how the servicing of the industry has changed over the years. In the 1950's, the main research performed on fruit growth was at what is now called the Fruit and Fruit Technology Research Institute in Stellenbosch (Stander, 1983:48). From the early seventies onwards, the various packing co-operatives in Elgin, for example, Kromriver Apple Cooperative (Kromco) and Elgin Fruitpackers Cooperative (Elfco), have employed scientists to research not only the packing of the fruit but also the horticultural aspects of fruit farming. Also an advanced group of farmers formed themselves into the Associated Elgin Farmers and employed people to advise them. Initially, in the early 1970's, this advice focused on horticultural aspects. It then moved, in the early 1980's to economics and business skills and now focuses on computers and computer programming (Kilpin, 1989).

Once the boom period had slackened in the mid-to-late-seventies, and with the increasing machinery, transport and labour costs, the farmers began to look at productivity and, particularly, how to increase the productivity of the workers. In the process, a number of further service organisations started. The first was the Elgin Community Development Association (ECDA), affiliated to the Rural Foundation. According to Kilpin (1989), the past chairperson of the ECDA, the initial aim of this organisation was to involve farmworkers in activities other than drinking at the weekends. The ECDA's programme has since broadened.

Another organisation that came to service this area was the Deciduous Fruit Unit of the National Productivity Institute

(NPI). The NPI is government sponsored and studies a particular industry and then develops suggestions and videos on how to increase the productivity of that industry. A third organisation, the National Training Institute (NTI) is a private organisation and, although it is similar to the NPI (in that its aim is to increase the productivity of the workforce), it studies each particular farm and suggests changes for that farm relating to the training of supervisors and improving picking techniques, for example.

In addition, each of the packing co-operatives has developed their advisory services for their members and this now includes advice on picking, pruning and workers' living conditions. While I will return to all of these organisations and their services later, it is important to note here that these services only developed in the mid-1970's to 1980's period and can be related to the increased availability of scientific knowledge and the increasing concern about productivity amongst farmers.

The results emerging from these research units, the demands for quality for the export industry, as well as attempts to decrease costs has meant that over the last twenty years many changes have been instituted on the various farms. While changes in the late 1960's and 1970's revolved around horticultural and other technological improvements (as I discuss shortly), these concerns about productivity in the industry became more crucial in the 1980's with changes being introduced which were more directly aimed at workers - for example the demands of high quality work

and the change to a 'cheaper' composition of the workforce (3).

A basic requirement for any analysis of the changes introduced in the 1980's, as related to the composition of the workforce and productivity, is an understanding of the production process, its annual cycle and the labour requirements during that cycle.

4.2. Production cycle and labour requirements.

Deciduous fruit production goes through a yearly cycle of thinning, picking, packing and pruning.

Thinning is the process whereby workers remove excess fruit from the trees while the fruit is still at a very small size. The aim is to ensure that no branches will be overladen and that all the remaining berries will develop to fruit of reasonable size and quality (Petersen,1976:3). According to Manager B, correct thinning is the most important part of production for quality. Thinning happens during specific dates in November and December and requires a 50% increase in the number of workers. The wives of the 'permanent' workers, their older children, and migrant workers make up the extra contingent required for this task.

Picking is the busiest time of the year as all the fruit has to be picked within dates set by the Deciduous Fruit Board (again for quality reasons). Different varieties are picked at different times during the period from February to May. An increase of 60% in the number of workers is required (Levy,1976:19). The fruit is picked off the trees, placed in shoulder bags and then placed in

(3) See Chapters Five and Six.

large bins where it is sorted into different grades. Speed and great care, to prevent bruising, are very important during the harvest. Most of the dependants of the permanent coloured workers, as well as an increased number of migrant workers, are, again, generally employed for this task.

The fruit had generally been packed on the farms in the past. More recently, most of the fruit has been transported in the graded bins to large co-operative packing sheds. There are four packing co-operatives in the Elgin area: Elgin Fruitpackers' Co-operative (Elfco) which was started in 1948 and now has 39 members (1989); Kromriver Apples Co-operative Ltd. (Kromco), which was started in 1970 and now has 53 members; Valley Packers, which was started in 1981 and now has 18 members; and Vyeboom Kooperasie, which was started in 1984 and now has 25 members. Generally, it is the smaller farmers that send their fruit to the packing co-operatives to be packed there. The large farms often still have their own packsheds and sometimes also pack the fruit from the neighbouring farms.

Having stripped the trees of fruit, it is generally the permanent workers and their wives, as well as a reduced group of migrant workers, who then prune the trees and prepare the farm for the next season. Pruning is a relatively skilled process and requires cutting back each tree in the correct places and painting over the wound as soon afterwards as possible. At this time, grafting of new varieties takes place and new orchards are planted.

As I have said this production cycle has become increasingly concerned with quality over the years. The various phases begin and end on specific dates each year and are strictly adhered to by the farmers because of this concern. The trend towards increased scientific control of production and greater productivity was given a boost in the 1970's with the introduction of several new innovations. While these innovations affected the productivity of workers, workers' skills and motivation were not the focus. These only became important in the 1980's. I outline some of the more technological innovations below.

4.3. Technological and other changes in the 1960's and 1970's.

These changes revolved around methods of increasing the yield per hectare, methods of training and trellising trees, grafting of trees and selection of the apple varieties, irrigation systems and the use of chemicals. It is important to note that while these innovations were the principle changes that occurred in the 1960's-1970's, technological knowledge and techniques have improved even further in the 1980's.

Yields per hectare were increased in two ways. Firstly, in the pre-1970 period, increasing the density of planting was the main way in which yields were improved. Originally 180 to 240 trees were planted per morgen, whereas, with more closely planted double rows, some farmers increased the density of planting to up to 500 trees per morgen (Petersen, 1976:2).

Secondly, in the 1970's, yields per individual tree slowly became the more important way in which yields were increased. This was achieved by the development of better strains of plants which were grafted onto older stock. According to Stander (1983:4)

"Such plant material has been shown, both experimentally and under commercial conditions, to be capable of yield increases of as much as 20 per cent".

To allow for easier picking and therefore higher productivity of workers and easier access for tractors and spray-machines, new methods for training and trellising the trees were developed. While in the past trees were trellised in the normal bush shape, most trees came to be trellised in a more flattened vertical plane in which the tree height was also limited (Petersen,1976:3).

Higher yielding varieties of plants were grafted onto old stock and scientific development of different varieties allowed farmers to be very selective about the crop. For example, farmers were able to adjust their production to changes in the demands for different types of apples as well as proactively create a demand for a different fruit type. The grafting techniques meant that, instead of replanting a whole orchard, it was possible to graft new stock onto the old which meant that the tree would bear fruit much sooner, or bear a different type of apple demanded.

In a similar way, the use of chemicals also allowed farmers to create and take advantage of early-season markets. By spraying the fruit with a hormone spray, it ripened earlier in the season

- at a time when there were relatively few apples on the market. Farmers were thus able to charge a relatively higher price for those apples. Besides creating an early market, these sprays also meant that the fruit spent less time on the tree and so reduced the losses due to windfalls and insect pests.(Manager A,1989).

Irrigation systems have also changed in the last twenty years. The fruit trees need most of their water in summer (the dry season in the Western Cape), so many dams were built in the area making the water supply ample. In the past, the trees were irrigated with sprinklers fed by 100 foot lengths of steel piping. These sprinklers and pipes had to be moved from area to area during the day. This method wasted water through evaporation and, importantly for this study, meant that even if the workers who moved the pipes were dealing with a number of different sprinkler systems, they were

"rarely kept continuously busy, but the amount of free time would not be sufficient for them to be transferred to some other task" (Petersen,1976:4).

Most farmers have introduced the modern microjet system. With this system, the plastic piping is fed through the trees and left permanently in place, requiring no labour. On some farms, computer-controlled irrigation was introduced. The computer reads the soil humidity and turns the microjet system on and off as required (Developer 1,1987).

A further change that began in the late 1960's and early 1970's

was the development and training of managers. Increasingly, Stander (1983:50) says,

"the new breed of farmer is a professional and a businessman, rather than a man satisfying a hankering to work the land or living on the farm only because he inherited it".

This process began, again due to the demands of export quality, as part of the attempt to develop a scientific monitoring and controlling of the production process. Managers with training in agricultural science and economics increasingly came to be employed, and thus production quantities, production costs and profits began to be all carefully monitored with records kept.

These technological innovations almost all took place in the absence of any significant thought about the workers - both in terms of their living conditions and in terms of their efficiency at work. It was only in the 1980's that workers' efficiency has become the focus of changes on farms with the assistance of a variety of organisations (4).

With this knowledge of the production cycle and technological changes that have happened in the area, it is possible to now present certain factors which show the specificity of the Elgin area. This is important because it provides the broader context within which the changes on the farms, that I discuss in Chapter Five, are situated.

(4) Which are looked at in the case studies.

4.4. The Present Situation in Elgin.

The Elgin area comprises approximately 9000 hectares of farmland, consisting of 151 farms. The farm sizes range from 12 hectares to more than 460 hectares, with the average farm being 50 hectares (Louw,1987:2-3).

Profitability and Productivity: The specificity of the Elgin area is shown by the fact that in 1986 it was the most profitable farming area in the country earning an average nett yield of R12 000 per hectare. (Louw,1987:3). This high profitability is due to a variety of factors including the suitability of the natural conditions, the scientific nature of the farming, the favourable export factor as well as the greater efficiency of the workers (although this is difficult to assess).

As far as the export factor is concerned, South African fruit, and especially apples, fetches a high price on over-seas markets. The Elgin area's fruit accounts for about 37% of all deciduous fruit which is exported from South Africa (Unifruco pamphlet, no date). In 1989 the total revenue from export fruit was about R920 million (Fine,1989) (5), and of this the Elgin area received R340 million. This is a completely different situation to maize which has been exported at a loss for the past decade. (De Klerk,1990:13)

This export factor has meant that the industry has gained a lot from the weaker rand and higher prices obtained on overseas markets. It has also meant, however, that the industry is

(5) Argus, 24 September 1989

directly affected by sanctions which I discuss in chapter five.

The Elgin area's profitability is thus high compared to other agricultural sub-sectors. This comparison does not necessarily reflect on the productivity on the farms in the other sub-sectors because production and market conditions, amongst others, differ so much for each product, that not much can be compared. It does, nevertheless, give us an indication of the fact that farmers in Elgin tend to have much more capital to spend on training, housing and other attempts to improve workers' productivity.

Comparing Elgin with the other deciduous fruit producing areas gives a better indication of the higher average productivity on the farms in Elgin. Using apples as an example, the total average output per hectare in the fruit industry as a whole was 53.38 tons/hectare (t/h) in 1989 while the average in Elgin was 58.06 t/h.(6). As regards high quality fruit, the percentage of 'Grade 1 above 59mm', was 61.76% for the sub-sector as a whole and 66.02% for the Elgin area. Importantly, the direct production cost per ton of output in the sub-sector as a whole was 165.40 while for the Elgin farms it was 151.08. This means that it was cheaper to produce more of a higher quality fruit in Elgin. This is reflected in the corresponding ratios for the gross farm income to direct production costs - 4.76 for Elgin and 3.54 for the sector as a whole.

(6) All the data used in this section, related to productivity in Elgin, was obtained from the National Productivity Institute's Deciduous Fruit Unit's Productivity Matrix for 1989-90.

Further, as regards the production of pears, the direct production cost per ton of output in Elgin was significantly higher - R237.75 as against R143.01 for the sub-sector as a whole. Nevertheless, because a greater percentage of the fruit was of higher quality - 72.80% was Grade 1 fruit above 59mm in diameter as opposed to 58.93% for the industry as a whole - the gross farm income to direct production costs ratio in Elgin remained higher than the industry average - 4.67 as compared to 4.51 respectively. The profitability of pears in Elgin therefore remained higher than in other areas.

As regards labour productivity, the output per worker in tons, was lower in Elgin. For pears, in Elgin, the average daily output per picker in 1989 was 1.15 tons and for the industry as a whole it was 1.40 tons. For apples, it was 1.65 tons per picker 'manday' in Elgin and 1.66 tons per picker 'manday' in the industry as a whole. These figures do not give an indication of productivity in terms of output per worker in Rands. I would argue that it is possible that one of the reasons that workers in Elgin pick less per hectare because they are being more careful and thus produce a higher quality fruit which then fetches a higher price on the market. Productivity in Elgin, measured as output per worker in Rand, is therefore on average higher than the average for the industry for both pears and apples.

While productivity in the Elgin area as a whole might have been higher than average for the sub-sector, this was not uniform. For example, output per hectare of apples in Elgin ranged from 30

tons to 75 tons, while output per picker 'manday' ranged from 1.2 tons to 2.01 tons. The ratio of the gross farm income to direct production cost varied from 2.0 to 5.99. There was therefore a vast difference in the productivity levels amongst the farms in Elgin.

Despite the technological advances and the increasingly scientific nature of fruit farming, it remains highly labour intensive. Louw (1987:3) found that approximately 35 workers' weeks per hectare were worked in 1987. This means that wages are extremely important in the overall production costs. Wages amount to between 40-50% of total production costs (Manager A,1989), as compared to 15 - 30 % in the engineering industry (Labour and Economic Research Centre,1989:37). This labour intensity means that labour productivity is a crucial aspect of the industry's profitability (7).

Wages and workers' living conditions:The higher earnings in Elgin, amongst other factors, have meant that wages in the area are generally better than the national averages for farmworkers. Marcus (1986:306) found that in the early 1980's, workers in the Western Cape received between R20 to R35 a week, whereas in other regions permanent workers could expect between R25 and R45 a month.

Despite this general higher wage amongst workers in the area, Kilpin, the ECDA chairperson, said that in 1986 wages in the area

(7) See Chapter Six

varied by as much as 300% for the same job (ECDA 'Chairman's Report',1989:2). Further, Louw's study found that 84% of the coloured workers received below the minimum subsistence level with an average income of R320 per month for coloured male workers in 1986. (Louw,1987:63) (This included an estimated R100 per month for housing and other provisions). The average wage for a coloured female worker was R147 per month. Thus, if other working members of the household were included then the average monthly cash income was R512 which meant that 50% of the households, of on average seven and a half people, still lived below the minimum subsistence level (8).

African workers, although comprising at least 60% of the workforce, were not included in Louw's study. He says, however, that from interviews with government administration board officials in the area, it appeared that African workers earned a cash wage of between R90 and R120 per month in 1986, much lower than the average coloured workers' wage (1987:128).

According to Louw (1987:26-28), housing for coloured workers was, generally, free-standing, brick housing with, on average, two bedrooms and 50% of these houses had water-borne sewage and bathrooms inside the house. 75% of the houses had electricity while 85% had cold running water-supply in the house. Overcrowding was a big problem with 75% of the beds having two or more people in them. African workers' living conditions were much worse. Most lived in single quarters or hostels and the

(8) The minimum subsistence level was calculated as R381.18 for a family of 5. (Louw,1987:66)

facilities available were limited (9).

Composition of the workforce: Until the 1950's, the labour force was composed of mainly coloured male workers who were employed on the farms as permanent workers. Extra seasonal workers were drawn in from the dependents of the workers on the farms and other workers in Genadendal, Botrivier and other towns close by. According to Petersen (1976:6), with the building of the Steenbras Dam in the 1950's, a larger number of African workers began to be employed on the farms. Some of these workers remained permanently on the farms, bringing their families with them from the bantustans. The declaration of the Western Cape as a 'coloured labour preference' area, however, as well as the increase in general influx control regulations placed limitations on their movements. African workers, thus, began to be only employed as migrants, returning to their families in the bantustans at the end of their contracts.

The increased use of African migrant workers over the last fifteen years was due to two factors. Firstly, there had been a marked increase in the demand for labour with the expansion of production using the more technologically advanced methods referred to earlier. Secondly, as I discussed in Chapter Two, attracted by the better pay and better living and working conditions in the towns, and in resistance to the bad situation on the farms, coloured workers began moving off the farms and into the towns (Petersen, 1976:7). This changing composition of

(9) Louw (1987:128) and personal observation.

the workforce has continued to the extent that African workers came to constitute the 'bulk' of the workforce during the whole year. (As early as 1976, Petersen indicated that African workers comprised at least 60% of the year's workforce (10).)

The movement of coloured workers off the farms, the threat of sanctions and the fact that the farmers in the area gain better profits per hectare, meant that some farmers in the area began to invest in the upgrading of the living conditions of the permanent coloured farmworkers in the 1970's. It is important at this point to stress that the upgrading process had begun in the Elgin area before the 1980's and so before the Rural Foundation's influence. This has meant that farmers in the area consider themselves and are considered by others in the ruling class, as being more conscientious and enlightened than the average capitalist farmer in the country.

4.5. Organisations in the area.

4.5.1. Farmers' organisations

According to Kilpin (1989), the chairperson of the ECDA, the organisation of farmers in Elgin is very different to most other areas in the country. In Elgin there are a number of organisations, for example, the Associated Elgin Farmers and the Elgin-Vyeboom Apple and Pear Growers' Association which fulfill aspects of the role that farmers' unions do in other areas.

(10) See Table 2 in Petersen (1976:7).

Through the AEF and other organisations, farmers have access to up-to-date technical and other information and are also able to mobilise themselves for various ventures. This meant, according to Kilpin (1989), that "we, as a district, found very little use for farmers' associations" because these other organisations performed most of an association's role.

Kilpin (1989) explained the development of the local farmers' union. He said that officials in the Western Cape Agricultural Union could not understand the situation where "I mean, here we were, one of the biggest exporting farming areas in the country, and no real representation".

So, after much persuasion an association was formed. But, Kilpin (1989) says,

"at that time it was somewhat political. So, the one group formed and then the other group decided, well, we'll have to form an association because otherwise we're not going to have a say in whatever needs to be said."

Two associations were, therefore, formed in Elgin; the Suid-Groenland Farmers' Association and the Elgin - Grabouw - Houwhoek Farmers' Association. According to Kilpin (1989) however, "Both associations do precious little" except send representatives to the local farmers' union.

The farmers' union is made up of representatives from these two farmers' associations, representatives from the Vyeboom Farmers' Association (an area nearby) as well as representatives from the

four packing co-operatives, and from the Elgin Fruitgrowers' Co-operative (the suppliers' cooperative). This Union then represents the area on the Western Cape Agricultural Union and through this, is represented on the South African Agricultural Union.

Thus, it is through the Groenland Farmers' Union that the district links up to national agricultural capital. On a local level, however, the union does not really play an important role and some of the managers who I interviewed were not even sure of its existence. The Elgin-Vyeboom Apple and Pear Growers' Association plays a much greater role because it is connected to the suppliers co-operative, of which every farmer is a member, and so, Kilpin (1989) says,

"that's the mouth piece for this district in terms of anything to do with apples, pears, peaches and plums, that sort of thing."

It is also through this association that farmers are mobilised for various projects, as I show later in this chapter with the formation of the ECDA.

Farmers in Elgin have also been mobilised around the Cape Fruitgrowers' Code. According to Downs (1989) one of the initiators of the code, it was formulated in 1985 in response to the political upheavals in the country at the time. A group, including farmers, headmasters and other community leaders, discussed the situation in Elgin. The fact that the farmworkers were not covered by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act was

raised as an important factor that needed to be changed. Four people, including Downs, Calvert and Developer 1, then formulated the code and a set of guidelines. This was presented to the Elgin Community Development Association as well as Elgin-Grabouw-Vyeboom Farmers' Association and 140 of the areas' farmers or their managers became signatories to the code.

Its stated objectives are to:

1. "Award the job to the person best qualified for the task, regardless of colour, sex, language or creed;"
2. "Pay a basic wage higher than the minimum subsistence level for the circumstances and the area;"
3. "Provide personal development for all through access to education and training;"
4. "Recognise the variety of human abilities and try to allocate duties to those best capable of performing them;"
5. "Recognise that the application of fair discipline requires the facility to give a fair hearing to legitimate grievances;"
6. "Provide incentives for improved performance where possible;"
7. "Provide decent housing, access to leisure-time, facilities and exposure to religious and cultural opportunities for employees;" and
8. "Respect the dignity of farmworkers and employees and avoid unfair labour practices."

While no organisation formerly adopted the code - individual farmers became signatories to it. In 1989, the marketing co-

operative, Unifruco, was in the process of drawing up a very similar code which it hoped its 5400 members would adopt. (11)

4.5.2. Workers' Organisations

Workers organisation is extremely limited on the farms in the area, as is the case nationally. The local packing co-operatives as well as the fruit-juice industries are all organised by the Food and Allied Workers (FAWU), an affiliate of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). At the formation of COSATU in 1985 it was decided to focus on the organisation of farmworkers, an unorganised sector, and FAWU was given the task of launching the effort. The aim was to eventually form a separate farmworkers' union.

The FAWU Farm Workers Project (FWP) in the Western Cape, appointed its first organiser, Aploon (1988), at the end of 1987. He was based in Grabouw, although he was responsible for organising in the large area from Mossel Bay to Upington. From late 1987 until the end of 1988, he organised in the Grabouw area. On many farms, basic union structures were developed and there were a number of strikes in the area. In March 1988, for example, there were strikes on three farms at the same time. Workers were demanding better wages and working conditions (12). Unfortunately, however, none of these structures were consolidated and so there were no union structures on the farms

(11) The Cape Fruit Growers' Code objectives and the Unifruco code were both reported in Argus 29/07/89.

(12) Reported in South (3/3/88)

in the area during 1989, and little direct experience of unionisation. (13)

Besides union organisation, there were 48 liaison committees in the area in December 1989. These were part of the Elgin Community Development Association (ECDA). These liaison committees generally only deal with social and community issues on the farm, although some were taking on a very small role in work-related problems. I will return to the discussion of these committees in Chapters Five and Six.

As I have said, this profile provides the context within which the changes on the four farms occurred, but it also provides an understanding of the context into which the Rural Foundation inserted itself. I now look directly at that process - the formation of the ECDA and its development.

4.6. The Elgin Community Development Association.

4.6.1. History

I have shown in the previous section that Elgin is "one of the more advanced farming areas in the country" (Bosman, 1986). This distinction occurs also in the area of community development. A number of the farms in the area have had some form of community development for at least thirty years (Kilpin, 1989).

Attempts to make this community development a more organised and

(13) The present FWP organiser is focusing on the Stellenbosch area.

generalised effort also pre-dated the formation of the Rural Foundation. Some farmers in the area feel that the Rural Foundation often used the experience of the Elgin area to develop many of their own programmes and did not give credit to these previous initiatives. (Kilpin,1989).

Discussions amongst farmers, relating to the formation of an organisation to deal with 'community development', began in 1977. It was only in 1980, however, that representatives from the Associated Elgin Farmers (AEF), the Elgin Fruitgrowers' Cooperative (the suppliers) and others developed a proposal that the Fruigrowers' Cooperative form a "Manpower Services Department" to start the process of organised community development. Kilpin (1989) said that although,

"there was nobody at the AGM that dissented,...when it came to putting their hands in their pockets and so on, you found that there were a lot of people that weren't interested"

So, the organising group, with the assistance of the suppliers co-operative sent a proposed constitution and membership forms to every farmer in the district. They also included the proposed amount each member would have to pay per worker family to be served by the community developer they hoped to employ (Kilpin,1989).

Thirty-nine farmers then formed the Elgin Community Development Committee (ECDC) which, in an attempt to obtain a government subsidy, affiliated to the Grabouw Family and Child Welfare

Society (14). The ECDC never received that subsidy and so for the first year, they employed and financed their community developer themselves. Similar to that of the Rural Foundation, this developer had to initiate projects and activities for the "free time" periods of farmworkers' lives.

Then in 1983, the ECDC affiliated to the Rural Foundation and became the Elgin Community Development Association. Their affiliation to the Rural Foundation seems to have been motivated mainly by the subsidy they were able to get. However, Kilpin (1989) says, "the Rural Foundation's aims and objectives were no different to ours really".

In 1983, the Rural Foundation started funding 75% of the expenses of the community developer. At first only one developer was employed but very soon it was felt that a second developer was needed and so the Rural Foundation agreed to finance the second. In 1986, the ECDA felt that a third developer was also necessary, in order to have one developer specialising in 'Manpower development' - work-related issues - and the other two to focus on 'community development' aspects. The Rural Foundation did not initially subsidise the third person, so for two years the ECDA financed the person themselves until recently, when the Rural Foundation had agreed to subsidise this position.

(14) This also occurred in other areas, for example, De Doorns and Wellington, where Child Welfare Society Subcommittees became the Rural Foundation Community Development Association in those areas (Calvert 1989).

4.6.2. Membership

As I have stated, the ECDA began with 39 member farmers. This remained constant for the first three years as the Association felt that the developers might become overloaded if new members were allowed. Since November 1986, however, the membership has increased at approximately 5 members per year so that in 1989 there were 55 members in the Elgin-Vyeboom area consisting of 151 farms. This means that one third of the farmers in the area are members.

4.6.3. The Executive Committee

The ECDA's executive committee comprised six elected members and two co-opted members. Each ward (see below) elects a chairperson who then represents the ward at the executive committee meetings (Annual Report of Developer 1, 1986). The executive committee's role seems to be to give guidance to the developers and to affirm their decisions on their various tasks.

The ECDA has not adopted any codes or other policies broader than Rural Foundation policies. Many of the members are signatories to the Cape Fruit Growers' Code (referred to earlier in this chapter) but the Association as such did not adopt it.

Furthermore, the ECDA executive committee does not seem to involve itself in activities and issues other than those related to the community developers' work, and to broader, combined ECDA or Rural Foundation activities (such as athletics meetings). Also, it does not, as a rule, involve itself in the standards or labour practices on each of the members' farms. This very limited

role of the ECDA and its committee is due to the voluntary nature of the membership.

If, for example, the ECDA adopted the fruitgrowers code, it would mean that every member would have to commit him or herself to that set of principles. If one of the members did not abide by it, the other members would be entitled to pressurise that member to conform. But, as Calvert (1989) explained, "Their (the ECDA's) whole existence depends on members. They've got to keep their members happy."

To "keep their members happy", then, the committee does not involve itself in pressurising them for fear of them leaving.

4.6.4. Ward Committees

When the ECDA started, all activities on the various farms were co-ordinated from the central office. In 1986, in order to facilitate the co-ordination and planning, the membership was divided geographically into six wards. In each ward, each member farm elects representatives from management and from the workers' liaison committee to sit on the ward committee.

In four of the wards, the management representatives and workers' representatives meet separately. They do this, according to Community Developer 2 (1989), because

"say, for instance, they are coming together with management. Then, maybe, some are a little bit shy. Say, for instance, my boss is sitting there and I've got a problem now. I don't know what his reaction will be, so I'll rather

keep quiet."

In two of the wards, however, the management and liaison committee representatives do meet together. In these, according to Developer 3 (1989) "they're totally used to the situation that management and worker comes together and talks about everything - sorts a problem out."

In this case, when the workers have got a potentially difficult issue to raise, Developer 3 (1989) says that "I think he would rather ask before the time or after the time, or ask us to raise the problem in the meeting, but they will sort it out."

The developers thus also acted as facilitators in these combined meetings.

4.6.5. The Community Developers

As I have said, there were three community developers in Elgin when the research was conducted, each with a specific focus to their work. Of the two involved with community development, Developer Three, a woman, focused on creches and housewife clubs, while the other, Developer Two, a man, focused on the youth clubs and sports clubs. The third, Developer Four (15), focused on 'manpower development' - initiating training of workers and management and, importantly, facilitating the training and the maintenance of the workers' liaison committees. This developer was also involved with trying to encourage the ECDA members to introduce service contracts as well as grievance and disciplinary

(15) Whom I did not interview.

procedures. (16)

These developers all had a certain amount of post-matric education and experience in the social scientific field (17). Developer 2 obtained a diploma in biblical studies from a bible school. He then worked in a children's home and with the youth connected to the bible school. Developer 3 had a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education and had worked as a cultural officer for the government's Department of Education and Culture for two years before joining the Rural Foundation. Developer 4 had trained and worked as a teacher for many years before joining the Rural Foundation.

All the Developers had also had subsequent in-service training by the Rural Foundation or had been sponsored by the Rural Foundation for training at other institutions, for example, University of the Western Cape and the National Training Institute (see Chapter 5).

The Rural Foundation's basic training included literacy teacher training, a course on community development and a more practical course on "how to handle problems, how to handle people, how to act amongst people..." (Developer 2:1989)

With this training, these three developers acted under the

(16) The Rural Foundation head office provided standard copies of these which each management then adapted to their wishes.

(17) Developer One, who had left the ECDA in 1988, had studied as an industrial relations consultant. He had worked as an industrial relations officer with the Chamber of Mines for a number of years before joining the Rural Foundation.

control of the executive committee and the regional Rural Foundation manager, as I explained earlier. Developer 4 was employed as a senior developer and performed the role of supervisor over the other developers as well as dealing with problems which might occur in between executive meetings.

The ECDA thus co-ordinated and undertook a wide variety of activities in the area, which I discuss in Chapter 5. It operated in the Elgin context, the specificity of which this chapter has tried to depict. This has been done by identifying the higher earnings gained by these farmers, the types of services available to the farmers, and the relatively advanced level of community development that has taken place. A more in-depth look at these services available and the types of changes occurring on the farms will occur in Chapter Five, with specific reference to the farms in the sample.

CHAPTER 5:
TRAINING, INCENTIVES AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
ON THE FARMS

In the historical development of capitalist agriculture in South Africa, the 1980's have seen a greater focus on developing "the quality of your labourers" (Manager C, 1989). As part of this concentration, the government and the South African Agricultural Union (SAAU) supported and funded the formation of the Rural Foundation (RF) to facilitate a national upgrading of the workforce.

I explained in Chapter One that once I had started researching the RF in Elgin, I found that the RF was one of many organisations in the area. As I broadened out my study to include an understanding of the services that the other organisations provided, it became clear that these services were all part of a broader process of trying to increase the productivity of workers in the area and this also entailed developing new forms of labour control (1).

On the farms in the sample, there were three major fields of change through which, I argue, management was trying to improve labour productivity and change the methods of control. Firstly, through the training of the workforce, both skills training and attitude training; secondly, through the use of various incentives and; thirdly through community development. These three aspects are clearly linked. Manager A explained how he

(1) The relationship between attempts to increase productivity and forms of labour control is discussed in Chapter Six.

understood it.

"He earns a better salary, he's got good clothing on. He wants to be clean, he wants to be neat... And I mean now that you are making the chap aware of what training can do, they are trying to go forward... There is a big improvement. The quality of the work, the whole control of the work, discipline has changed." (Manager A,1989).

In this chapter I deal separately with each aspect of change, looking at the organisations involved and the actual processes and methods that the various farms use. As a basis for this discussion of the changes, I have outlined the different reasons that are given for why management introduced the various processes on the farms in the first place.

5.1.Why the changes ?

Several reasons were given as to why management had introduced the various changes, depending on the respondents. They included i. Economic; ii. Sanctions; iii. Trade Unions; iv. Benevolence; v. Peer-group pressure.

5.1.1. Economic

According to Jones-Phillipson (1989) from National Training Institute : "Ten years ago agriculture was in a boom. There was lots of money around. People were buying farms. The export market was humming."

In the 1980's, however,

"There has been an incredible cost squeeze in agriculture with the revenue/income from the fruit increasing but very slightly and the costs of spray material and the cost of labour increasing phenomenally" (Jones-Phillipson,1989).

This has meant that all the costs, of machines, raw materials and labour, are higher. Farmers' reactions to this have been, according to Manager C (1989), that "as inflation takes its toll, you find that you've got to now get more productivity."

5.1.2. Sanctions

Linked to increased costs, sanctions are given as a further reason for farmers' involvement, especially in developing the workers' living conditions on the farms. Calvert (1989) said,

"I think sanctions has got a lot to do with it, or the threat of sanctions. It is necessary for many farmers to upgrade housing, to upgrade wages, because... those are physical things that you could bring up against them. "Can you see, that's the apartheid fruit you are buying. Can you see how these people are treated!" That's one reason why the farmers are involved, I think".

The importance of this aspect can be seen by the fact that the packing co-operatives themselves have become involved in trying to upgrade conditions. Manager D1 (1989) said, for example, that

"Kromco has 56 members and they have actually stipulated that any farmer whose houses are below a certain thing and wages are below a certain thing, they won't take as members

anymore. Because of the sanctions story and everything like that... for us, to help us. Because they get American guests and they can't keep saying we'll take you to this farm and then they take them to the top farm. These people must say, 'Take me there, take me there', and they mustn't be embarrassed to take them onto that farm".

5.1.3. Trade Unions

The Rural Foundation's position on trade unions, according to Bosman (1986), is that

"We accept to a great extent the fact that trade unions are already there and that they will get more involved in agriculture. We are giving guidance in the field, on request, on what labour unions are. How they operate. What can be done to get the necessary information to farmers to get their own house in order". (My emphasis)

In line with this attempt to "get their house in order", Manager D1 (1989) said that "Kromco has helped us, and so did the ECDA with getting a contract together, by upgrading our housing".

"Getting their house in order" has also entailed, on some farms, discussions with workers about unions and what workers can expect if they organise unions on farms. Worker A3 (1989) told me that they did not need a union because,

"As the manager explained to us, the way I understand it, we must stay as we are. We are quite happy with the manager. We can talk heart to heart with the manager. We can solve our

problems together. All the workers feel like that" (2)

Worker A4 (1989) said that it had been explained to these workers that if they joined a union,

"(The) wage will definitely increase, but then they will have to pay all the other expenses... (At this point they are staying here rent free. All they have to pay is electricity). ...So it's not worth their while, because although they'll get more money, they'll have to pay more money out, so how much would be left ?" (3).

In reaction to the perceived threat of unions and realising their power in the control of the workers' wages and living conditions, some farmers have tried to improve these to limit the possible grievances that workers have that would motivate them to join unions.

Once these conditions have been improved, farmers can then use this power as a counter-threat. Manager C (1989), explained that

"Here, they've got their families, they rely on the houses.

I don't like holding the houses as a threat over their heads but you do have all that. I think it will get to that".

(2) Original: "Soos die bestuur ons verduidelik het, soos ek die ding nou verstaan, moet ons maar bly soos ons is. Ons is meer gelukkig saam met die bestuur. Ons kan saam van harte met die bestuur praat. Ons kan saam ons sake oplos. Al die werkers voel so."

(3) Original: "Die wages sal definitief styg, maar dan moet hulle al daai ander goed betaal. ...(Op die huidige oomblik bly hulle verniet hier. Al wat hulle betaal is krag) ...So dit staan hulle nie toe nie, want al kry hulle 'n klomp geld en hulle het daai uitbetaal, hoeveel het hulle tog maar daarvan oor?"

On Farms A, B and C, this attitude prevailed amongst management and they had all either already spoken to their workers about unions or intended to do so in the near future. Their general attitude can be summed up by Manager B (1989), who said that

"It is not that we wouldn't allow it, ...because I think everybody is free to do what they please. But I think those points that I mentioned are enough to discourage them." (that is that they will have to pay for rent, electricity, transport etc.)

On Farm D, there was a different attitude to unions. They were trying to 'get their house in order' but, Manager D1 (1989) said, "I never bring the subject up here, I'm too scared to, in case then it suddenly flares up."

But while there was this fear of unions, Manager D1 (1989) had resigned herself to their eventual emergence on the farm.

"If it happens, it happens. I'd hate them to be here because they basically rule you in the end".

5.1.4. Benevolence

According to Calvert (1989),

"There are genuine farmers, who genuinely wanted to do something about their employees, who realised that they have been exploited for many years. They won't say it, but they realise it. I'm not going to say I exploited someone for 10 years, I'm just going to change my heart."

This guilt about the way in which they treated workers in the past, was expressed by Manager A (1989) when he said

"I mean the one thing is that in the past we expected too many things from other people but we didn't want those things to be done to us."

Responding benevolently to this guilt is therefore a further reason given for the decision to improve workers' conditions. This benevolence was clearly shown in Manager A's (1989) explanation of the effect that the upgrading had had on the workers.

"The chap used to take his money and go and buy his dop and go to sleep under a tree, and he will wake up there on Sunday afternoon. But I mean now, we've got all houses fitted out with electricity, ...that type of thing. Now, at least, tomorrow that chap is a clean man. ...He earns a better salary, he's got good clothing on. He wants to be clean, he wants to be neat. ...You give a chap a sort of self-image. The whole thing that was lacking with these people, they had no self-image. I mean, you can imagine that for yourself". (my emphasis).

5.1.5. "Peer-group pressure"

Upgrading of workers' living conditions has been happening in Elgin for two decades but since the Rural Foundation has been operating in the area it has almost become prestigious for farmers to upgrade the conditions on their farms. When discussing this with Developer 3 (1989), she explained it in this way:

"I will be out if I'm not in, so I must be in, not to be out. I'm very interested because my neighbour is involved".

Manager A (1989) explained the influence that the Rural Foundation has had on the ripple effect of peer-group pressure.

"I think it is very important to have a thing like the Rural Foundation going, because at least you've got a body earmarked for the job. It does get your other buggers to pull up socks and get aware of it. You dare find Oom Piet on the other side slowly but surely getting interested".

Having looked at the five major reasons given for farmers embarking on the upgrading processes on the farms, the study now addresses those processes, looking at three different fields of change; Training, Incentives and Community Development.

5.2. Training

Training for farmworkers has really only taken off in the 1980's and a number of organisations have developed specifically for this purpose. I look at a number of these operating in Eglin.

5.2.1.1. The National Training Institute (NTI)

The NTI is a private company and was formed in 1980 by Loudie Groenewald who had been with the Building Industry Federation of South Africa (BIFSA) involved in "training development" (Jones-Phillipson, 1989). The NTI started operating in Cape Town at a number of different firms such as; clothing factories and motor car garages. In 1986, "through word of mouth", they started

operating on the farms, first in Elgin, then in the De Doorns, Wellington and Ceres areas. They are now working on 17 farms in the Elgin area, many of whom are also members of the ECDA (Jones-Phillipson,1989).

The company aims to assist

"the manager in the development of his subordinates (managers, supervisors and workers) in order to improve productivity and to achieve the results that managers wish to achieve in the business" (NTI pamphlet,no date).

They do this by first consulting with management to find out in which area there are problems. They then do a "needs-analysis" using some of their 30 training development officers who are either industrial engineers who focus on the work study aspects or they are qualified in the behavioural sciences. The "needs-analyses" focus on three interrelated aspects;

1. Organisational: The way the work is organised,
2. Systems: Information systems,
3. Employees: Attitude, knowledge and skills.

Once the "needs-analysis" is completed the development officers then consult with other specialists in the field, for example at the packing cooperatives, and develop specific training programmes to deal with the problems identified. The company prides itself on the appropriateness and specificity of the courses developed. Jones-Phillipson (1989) explained that

"If you want supervisor training we are not going to teach them how to discipline workers if they don't do it in the work placeIf part of his job is to draw up a plan, we teach him to draw up a plan, we won't teach him how to do planning".

The NTI also prides itself in the flexibility to meet specific needs of programmes developed. This flexibility was well explained by the Manager A (1989) who said - "But I do what I like with NTI. Whatever I like, where I feel the needs are".

The skills courses that are developed specifically for management, supervisors or workers relate to the three interrelated aspects of organisational, systems and employees. Jones-Phillipson (1989), the NTI official, explained that on the farms, there are managers who have been managers "for 15 years and he stands in the orchard and watches the foreman watch the supervisors who watch the workers."

Using their strategic management specialist, Jones-Phillipson (1989) said, the NTI develops training for management. This includes,

"Basic management routines, drawing up of plans which can be discussed with the supervisors on a weekly or monthly basis. Their communication routines with their subordinates on a one-to-one basis and a group basis ...Basically people management and business management".

The training of workers (skills, knowledge and attitude training) is done through a system of instructors. Each farm sends workers to be trained by NTI. These instructors then train the workers in picking, pruning, thinning, sorting and tractor handling.

An important part of the training that the NTI provides for farms is the "Winners Programme". It is an educational programme (mainly focused at the workers) and involves

" practical participation from the group attending, to

- i. create an understanding of the different perceptions and expectations existing on management, supervisors and workers' level and how to bridge this gap;
- ii. familiarise the workforce with their work, work environment and the farm as a whole;
- iii. equip the workers with the knowledge with respect to the functioning of the farms as a business;
- iv. their roles and responsibilities with respect to the functioning of the business;
- v. the nature of their contributions with respect to the productivity of the farm;
- vi. increase cost consciousness of workers;
- vii. equip workers with the required skills, knowledge and attitude to improve their contributions/work suggestions etc. towards the success of the farm;
- viii. increase workers' participation in their work;
- ix. increase loyalty and motivation of the workforce. "

(NTI Information pamphlet, Winners Programme, no date)

The NTI suggests that managers, supervisors and workers go through the programme but in two different groups - managers and supervisors together, and workers separately - each with an instructor.

5.2.1.2. NTI On The Farms

The NTI has been operating on Farm A since 1987 and on Farm B since 1986. Farm C has never drawn the NTI in because, Manager C said the farm was too small to warrant it, while farm D used the NTI in 1987, but had subsequently not renewed the contract because, according to Manager D1 (1989), "We needed a break; we couldn't carry on spending all that money which to me wasn't getting us anywhere."

Farms A, B and D all have instructors who have been trained by NTI. On Farms A and B, these instructors run education and skills sessions throughout the year. Just before each phase of the annual cycle begins, for example pruning, the instructor gives a training course on that phase. On Farm A, the instructor performs other odd jobs and administrative functions on the farm while he is not doing courses, while on Farm B the instructor works in the orchard with the other workers, sometimes as a supervisor and sometimes as a general worker, depending on the phase during the year. This means that on Farm B, according to Manager B (1989), the instructor knows how the workers are working and so every morning before they start work, the instructor

"goes through certain weak points which he notices in the orchard. He just sort of briefs them on that, sort of 15/20

minutes to keep them on their toes."

On Farm D, the instructor had run a course on the picking of apples, in the previous season, but it seemed to have been very limited and was not a course run regularly.

Management on Farms A and farm B had also arranged training courses for the supervisors on the farm. On Farm A there were between five and eight supervisors during the year while on Farm B there were three that supervised at different times in the year. The supervisory training included both knowledge of the trees and picking, pruning and thinning methods, but also, Worker B1 (1989) explained, "how to talk to people and give a bit of encouragement" (4).

On Farm D, they did not have a supervisory group as such (although the tractor drivers sometimes acted in that role). There was thus no supervisory training on this farm.

Management on both Farms A and B clearly put a lot of emphasis on training. They said this training was effective on a number of different levels. On the level of skills there was a link between the workers' knowledge and ability and the supervisors' ability to supervise. This link was clearly explained by Worker A1 (1989), the chairperson of the liaison committee who was also a supervisor :

(4) Original: "hoe om met mense te praat en so bietjie aan te moedig."

"I must say that before that time I was already a supervisor at work. It wasn't easy. But since they offered us the courses, it has helped us a lot. I mean they (the workers) now give better attention to the work. It's not necessary to talk too much. Look the man gets his training at work and he sees what has to be done. So when he comes to work he knows exactly what he has to do. So, it's not really necessary to tell them how to pack the tools and all those things. They know it !" (5)

The skills training of workers and supervisors was thus designed to increase workers' efficiency. But the skills training had also been planned to have an effect on workers' "attitude". I was first alerted to this aspect of training by Manager A in an informal discussion after the interview. When I interviewed Manager B, it became clear that the farmers wanted skills training to include a motivational aspect. On both Farms A and B, for example, the workers were given certificates for courses completed.

On Farm A, Worker A2 (1989) told me that .

"Every season the workers receive a certificate - a green one, a silver one or a gold. The people place great

(5) Original: "Ek moes sê ek is voor daai tyd al toesighouer op die werk. Toe het dit nie so maklik gegaan nie. Maar nadat hulle vir ons die kurse aanbied, dit help vir ons geweldig baie. ...Ek meen hulle gee nou beter aandag aan die werk. Ek hoef nie meer so baie to praat nie. Kyk die man, hy kry sy opleiding by die werk, en hy sien wat om te doen. So as hy by die werk kom, dan weet hy presies net wat hy moet doen.... So dit is nie eintlik nodig om vir hulle to sê hoe om die gereedskap te pak en al daardie dinge. Hulle weet dit !"

importance in it "(6).

Manager B (1989) described that, on Farm B,

"for each qualification they have a certificate and they can take that home with them, frame it (we supply the frames at a reasonable amount) and they hang it up so that everybody can see."

'Attitude training' was far more developed in the form of the 'Winners Programme'. On both Farms A and B the workers had had 'Winners Programme' training. (The question of migrant workers is interesting here because they are not "permanently" on the farm so farmers are unsure as to whether the migrant workers should spend time on the 'Winners Programme'. It seems, however that the move towards longer contracts and a higher return rate of migrants has meant that Farm A intends to run the programme for migrant workers, once it has been translated into Xhosa. On Farm B all the workers participated together). As I explained earlier, and as Worker B1 (1989) explained to me, this programme shows workers the

"things in business, how a business works. ...How the farm makes a profit, and they explain on the board that if the farm is profitable, we are assured we will also get something out of it. A person is inclined to ask, 'What do I get, I who am working?' He gets something! The first thing the farm looks at is the people and their benefits on

(6) Original: "Elke seisoen kry die werkers 'n sertifikaat; 'n groen een, 'n silver een of 'n goud. Die mense hulle stel belang daarin."

the farm." (7)

The aim of this training, according to Manager B (1989), is that "If he knows why he is doing a certain job then he is less likely to do a mistake".

In conjunction with this, workers are told that if they inflict losses on the farm, they bring down the whole farm and in the process, they suffer. Worker A4 (1989), the instructor at Farm A, explained this to me:

"Before mister, sometimes during the week, a man comes down from the 'barracks', goes into the orchards, picks a bag full of fruit and sells it, all that type of thing. The development helps them now because they know themselves that the money is not just for the farm. It benefits him too, he also gets a share of it. If he causes any damage to the farm, then there'll be no money to pay him" (8).

As far as these responses are concerned, therefore, the aim of the 'Winners Programme', in conjunction with the other skills training on Farms A and B, was to develop workers' efficiency and

(7) Original: "dinge in 'n besigheid, hoe die besigheid werk. as die plaas wins maak dat ons verseker wees ons sal iets daar uitkry. 'n Mens is mos geneig om te sê wat kry ek; ek wat werk. Hy kry iets. Die eerste ding wat die plaas na kyk, hy kyk na die mense se voordeel op die plaas."

(8) Original: "Vantevore meneer, partykeer in die week, 'n man kom daar bo uit die 'barracks' uit, gaan hy in die boorde in, pluk sy sak vol vrugte en verkoop dit, al daai tipe dinge. Die ontwikkeling help hulle nou, sodat hulle self weet die geld gaan nie net vir die plaas nie. Dis 'n voordeel vir hom ook, hy kry ook 'n deel daar uit. As hy skade aan die plaas doen, dan is daar nie geld om vir hom ook te betaal nie".

care at work as well as their commitment to the enterprise (9).

The only form of training that occurs on Farm C was training of tractor and lorry drivers. This was done through the Cape Pomological Society. Manager C's (1989) response to a question of whether he had got the NTI in was,

"We haven't got that here... It is quite different actually, we talk of different sizes of farms and I don't have managers and foremen and that sort of thing".

Formal training in basic picking and pruning skills for workers did not exist on this farm.

Management on Farm D, as I said, had trained an instructor with NTI and had planned to have a supervisory training programme but cancelled it because they felt they were not getting the results which they had expected.

This feeling about the NTI was intermingled with other criticisms of the NTI that I had heard raised by other farmers in the area. Manager D1 (1989) explained that

"It was difficult with my dad. He believed, I mean he grew up on the farm and he never went to varsity and he just didn't like these Cape Town people cruising in here and saying if you want to you should be able to go on holiday at season time otherwise you don't manage your farm correctly".

(9) This is discussed further in Chapter Six.

I put this to the NTI and in response Jones-Phillipson (1989) said that

"It's basically a planned process of change over the long term. ...We can show results very quickly but those will be short term results. And the whole thing is a bunch of short term results over a long term to achieve what we are setting out in the end".

and secondly that;

"they've got all the knowledge, we don't have the knowledge. We've just got to order the knowledge to bring it down to a point" (Jones-Phillipson, 1989).

The NTI's task seems to be, therefore to develop a smoother running, more organised production process. This means that, on the one hand, workers must be more aware of the labour process: for example, Worker A4 (1989), the instructor explained

"We don't want the situation where the supervisor knows everything. We want the workers to know as much as the supervisor knows" (10).

On the other hand, the NTI wants workers to be more aware of capital's attempt to decrease losses and increase profits, especially in relation to production for export. Worker A2 (1989) explained what the supervisors had been told by the NTI

"They try, in the nicest way, to keep the quality on the

(10) Original: "Ons wil nie hê die toesighouer moet alles weet nie. Ons wil hê die werkers moet ook graag weet wat die toesighouer weet".

farm high. It helps all of us. ... If we start picking and we bruise the apples and that sort of thing, then it won't go for export, then it goes to 'fruit juices'. Then they (the farmers) automatically get, we get less at 'fruit juices' than for export. This is what they teach us at the NTI" (11).

5.2.2.1. The National Productivity Institute

In 1966 the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) had a conference with 'productivity' as the theme. A resolution was passed at this conference to the effect that an organisation involving employers' organisations, trade unions and government should be established to attend to productivity improvement in South Africa. The Productivity Advisory Council was thus formed in February 1968. The council had a secretariat attached to it as a research body and this became known as the National Productivity Institute (NPI) (12). The NPI's link to the SABS was temporary and in April 1975, the NPI began operating as a 'non-profit' association.

The Productivity Advisory Council continues to exist with 21 representatives from the three sectors;

(11) Original: "Hulle probeer op die mooiste manier, die beste kwaliteit van die plaas op hoog te hou. Dit help vir ons almal. dinge, dan gaan dit nie uitvoer toe nie, dan gaan dit 'fruit juices' toe. Dan kry hulle automaties, kry ons minder by die 'fruit juices' as by die uitvoer. Dis wat hulle ons als leer by die NTI".

(12) Presidents Council Report, PC 1/1989: 139

1. Capital - including, amongst others, the Chamber of Mines of South Africa, the Association of Chambers of Commerce, the Afrikaanse Handels Instituut, the South African Federated Chamber of Industries and the South African Agricultural Union.
2. Government - including, amongst others, the Department of Manpower, the Department of Trade and Industry, the Central Economic Advisory and the Central Statistical Services as well as the statutory organisations, the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, the South African Bureau of Standards and the Human Sciences Research Council.
3. Labour - including the South African Confederation of Labour and the Federation of Salaried Staff Associations of South Africa (NPI Annual Report, 1987/88:2)

A board of 6 directors is then elected from these representatives and a chairperson is appointed by the Minister of Manpower.

There are four divisions in the NPI namely; Industrial Engineering, Economics and Finances, Marketing and Human Resources. Through these divisions the NPI involves itself in three major forms of activity: research and development work, the provision of productivity advisory services and the creation of productivity awareness (13).

(13) President's Council Report P.C. 1/1989:138

The research and development work is funded by the state and a number of different projects related to productivity increases have been developed. An example of this is a productivity measurement computer programme called the Resources Allocation Strategist (Realst). This programme allows management to

"monitor changes in profitability, productivity, capacity, utilisation, efficiency, price recovery, etc. for each resource of a business" (NPI Annual Report, 1988/89:22).

The NPI becomes directly involved in the individual enterprises through the productivity advisory services. These services are sold on a commercial basis and most are provided through specialised productivity units in particular industries. These units generally begin with a state-financed productivity survey, the results of which form the basis of the ongoing service. Important for my study is the existence of such a unit functioning in the deciduous fruit industry (14).

Advisory services are not restricted to the units. The four divisions also develop services which are useable in all units. Important in this is the 6M simulation game which, although it was developed by the National Institute for Personnel Research, has been marketed by the Human Resources division of the NPI. The 6 M's are men, money, materials, markets, machinery and

(14) President's Council Report P.C 1/1989:138
There are also units in clothing, footwear, furniture, textiles, construction, health services, municipalities, printing and allied services, metals and engineering, mining, agricultural cooperatives and firms in decentralised areas.

management. According to a NPI pamphlet, 6M (no date), this game "illustrates to employees the basic business aspects in your organisation, as well as their functions and interactions. Understanding these aspects and knowing how their well-being is influenced by that of the company, equips the employees and motivates them to make a positive contribution towards better performance".

In a similar way to the NTI's 'Winners Programme', the 6M simulation game educates workers in the principles of business, aims to increase the workers' efficiency and care in their work and improve workers' commitment to the enterprise. Although the NTI's 'Winner Programme' is used on the farms which I visited, the Rural Foundation, generally, encourages the use of the 6M game on its members' farms. It was reported in the RF's 1988/89 annual report that the NPI has allowed the RF to train its own 6M game instructors on its member farms. At that stage there were only ten instructors trained and 871 workers had attended a 6M course. (1989:19)

The productivity awareness activities are mainly targeted at the management of the different enterprises. One method in which awareness is developed is through the NPI magazine, 'Productivity S.A.'. More importantly awareness is developed through National Productivity Award competitions. The entrants are evaluated for the

"productivity improvement achieved, the nature of the

improvement, the transferability of the process, the innovativeness, the size of the organisation and the publicity value of the entry" (15).

The Productivity Awards competitions occur not only on a national level, but there are also unit awards - for example the farmers in the deciduous fruit industry have their own competitions. In addition, there are regional awards; for example the Cape Town region.

Financing of the NPI has changed over the years. Initially the organisation was totally funded by the government. This changed

"as it became evident that, to be effective, the NPI should become involved in marketing productivity services against payment by the beneficiaries" (16).

Nevertheless, it still receives more than half its budget from the government, that is, R8 million in 1988/89 out of a total of R14 million rand.

5.2.2.2. NPI on the Farms

The NPI's Deciduous Fruit Unit started with a survey of the productivity of apple pickers in April 1983. The survey focused on three aspects namely; production methods, personnel management practices, and a financial analysis of the process. It was on the basis of this study that the unit was set up.

(15) President's Council Report P.C. 1/1989:141

(16) President's Council Report P.C. 1/1989:141

The NPI develops material in consultation with NPI members which is then used more broadly. They have developed videos for example on pruning, picking and supervisory aspects.(Jones-Phillipson,1989). Besides this they develop training sessions and seminars, the main target of which is management. According to the NPI, in its 1987/88 Annual Report, "Effective management is the key issue in South Africa today" (NPI,1988:10).

The unit only has two officials in the Elgin area, an industrial engineer and a human resources person. Their ability to provide an extensive service to the industry is therefore limited. Of the managers that I interviewed, only Manager A had used the videos which the NPI had made, but generally they had not drawn the NPI in. Manager A (1989) explained that the NPI operated differently to the NTI. This meant that

"Individually, we didn't get them in just to come and solve certain problems. Because look, they are more on a broader spectrum for the whole fruit industry".

They do not, therefore, develop courses aimed at specific farms.

The NPI's material is used by other organisations, for example as Jones-Phillipson (1989) from the NTI explained the links between the two organisations and how the NPI assists the industry.

"We do a lot in conjunction with each other. We use their videos in our training. They use certain information we have. At the moment we probably use them much more than they use us because they are much bigger and not as client specific as we are".

5.2.3. The Packing Co-operatives

The packing co-operatives have added a technical assistance to the services they make available to their member farmers. To explain the services that are available, I will refer to KROMCO as an example. KROMCO has 54 members and these members are divided up geographically into groups of 5 or 6 farms. Each of these groups then has a 'clinic' for each phase of the annual cycle. Representatives from the farms in the group meet together with KROMCO technical people to discuss problems and potential problems for that part of the cycle. Manager E (1989) explained that, on farm E,

"immediately on returning to the farm, the entire labour force is got together and each person in turn, that attends those training courses, has a turn to explain what he has learnt to the labour force. So that in that way we feel that the most up-to-date technical knowledge is not just getting to management level and left lying there. It's going all the way through, down to the labourer".

Besides these 'clinics' the technical staff at the co-operatives are always available for assistance. Manager E (1989) said,

"I can't remember when last we had to go to the University of Stellenbosch or any other Government Institution to get information because it's all available here. Because they are in continual contact with the industry's top people, being part of the top range themselves".

5.3. Incentives

On Farms A and B the emphasis is placed on attempting to increase productivity of the workers through skills training and developing workers' knowledge of the labour process. This is a longer term method of improving productivity. All farms, however, use some form of financial incentives to increase productivity, and the emphasis on this method ranges from Farm C, where it is the major way in which the farmer tries to increase productivity, to Farm B where management discourages the reliance on incentives. Manager C (1989) explained his position,

"I think the incentive cash wages makes a big difference. It is obviously more sweat on our side because it must be counted and we've got to check more on the quality of the work because we're trying to be that much faster. That to me is the only way that the productivity increases".

Different systems exist where the financial, piece-rate incentives are either paid per person or per team. On Farm A, the incentives are paid per worker so that in each team there is a "kaartjie knipper" (17) who clips each individual's card for every bag of fruit that each individual picks.

On Farm B, management's attitude to incentives is different. Manager B (1989) explained that he hoped that the workers' attitude to their jobs would be that "this fruit I must get off. This is my responsibility".

(17) Card-clipper

In trying to develop this attitude, management places less emphasis on piecework incentives and rather encourages workers to increase their wages by getting better qualified. Manager B (1989) described the payment system on the farm:

"We have a list of the chap's abilities, his qualifications, and in a column we have the rands and cents comparing to these abilities. And that is how we upgrade the chaps. ... Every six months we also have each chap in and we have a big chat about his performance in the past and what he's going to do in the future".

But while management is working against the emphasis on financial incentives, Manager B (1989) said that "You can't get away without incentives, otherwise you are not going to get your crop in".

On Farms C and D, the workers are divided into teams, where the team receives the bonus. The aim of this, according to Manager D1 (1989) is to build "motivation and team spirit".

Manager D1 (1989) explained that on that farm,

"they have to pick one bin for us and over and above that they get a bonus, R2.00 per person per bin. In ten weeks of picking they can make an absolute fortune and they do. I mean the one team has actually got a bonus of R10.20 (per person) just for a day, but I mean they worked for it, they really worked damned hard".

On Farm C, Manager C (1989) said that although

"they normally go in two teams, this year they went in one team.... (But while picking) (t)hey actually split into two working teams so they actually raced against each other to compete. There wasn't any extra cash (for the faster team). The whole team got the bonus on the production".

Another form of financial incentives that is beginning on the farms is 'profit-sharing'. Of the farms I researched, it was only in existence at Farm D and it was the first year that they had tried it. When I discussed profit-sharing with Manager D1, it became clear that there were a number of aspects to its introduction on the farm. Firstly, one of the biggest problems on the farm identified by management was high labour turnover. By introducing profit-sharing, they were hoping to get workers to remain on the farm for longer. Manager D1 (1989) told me:

"We keep telling them, because a lot of them left, and we kept telling them that you being stupid, you're in line for profit-sharing in Easter".

Secondly, profit-sharing seems to be an attempt by management to increase the care and efficiency with which workers work. Manager D1 (1989) explained that with profit-sharing

"No matter who you are, whether you're a garden boy, or the general manager, there's a certain amount being put away and it's going to be divided up. That they're (the workers) finding difficult but I think when it happens, for the

following year, it might help again. Because they'll know that this year there's so much because of the quality of this year's fruit".

Besides these financial incentives, other piece rate incentives are also used. On Farm D, Manager D1 (1989) explained

"I bought in the Coke Story and I said 'Okay, the best team everyday will get Coke. Half of us (management) were keen on it and the other half said it would never work. Well, there's such a fight to win, I mean, they are in one tenth of a bin of each other as a team. So, I think that is quite nice and I'm trying to think of incentives to keep it going".

A final incentive, one which is not directly related to production, is the provision of good housing. Management reasons that the provision of better housing will encourage better workers to work on the farms. Farmer C (1989) explained that

"In the quality of housing and electricity, to improve the actual conditions, ...your quality of labourers improves. ...Through that you get better productivity because you get more responsibility."

There are therefore a number of ways in which managers try to directly increase the productivity of the workers on these farms. Firstly, there are the skills and attitude training on Farms A and B. Although training films for apple pickers have been used since the 1960's, it has only been in the 1980's that conscious

training of farmworkers has developed in the area. This represents a qualitative shift in farming from the situation when, according to Worker B2 (1989) "in the past we just picked".
(18)

Secondly and in conjunction with this training, management also uses a number of different production-related incentives as an attempt to increase the productivity of the workers. These incentives vary from the profit sharing, which is an incentive based on annual production, to the 'Coke story' which is based on daily production.

In addition, non production-related incentives are also developed to encourage workers' productivity. Housing and community facilities form the core of these.

5.4. Community Development

'Community Development', on the farms in the case study, included changes in the physical conditions of workers' lives; for example, improving housing and childcare facilities; as well as changes in workers' social relationships. These relationships were affected by, amongst other things, the establishment of clubs, societies and committees. On the farms, it was largely management who determined the state of the workers' physical conditions of life while the RF was the most important agency in this second aspect of community development.

(18) Original: "in die verlede het ons maar net gepluk".

5.4.1.1. Housing

The quality of housing varied from farm to farm. On Farms A, B and D, management had in some way structurally improved the housing - for example, by adding extra rooms. On Farm C, however, the basic housing structures had not been improved and remained small. While structural improvements varied from farm to farm, there were also differences on particular farms between housing for African workers and housing for coloured workers.

Improvements in housing conditions have been similar on Farms A and B. On Farm A, housing for coloured workers has received the most attention, with the building of new houses and the upgrading of old houses.

By the mid 1980's, all the coloured worker families lived in either two, three or four bedroom houses with bathrooms, lounges and kitchens. Each house has electricity installed, hot and cold running water in the house as well as water-borne sewage. The owner of the farm also provides an electric stove in each house.

On Farm B a similar situation exists where, by 1975, all the houses had been fitted with electricity and water (on this farm there is no discrimination on the basis of colour). More recently two new houses had been built and all the houses had been repainted and the roofs had all been cleaned.

By contrast, on Farm C, Worker C1 (1989) explained that the houses

"are not of the best ... It's only the lights. ... The water is outside, ... the toilets are situated about 20 meters from the house, ... and if a person wants to use the toilets, this time of the year, you walk about this deep in water; lots of mosquitoes in this place where we stay" (19).

I visited Worker C2's house, considered by the workers as one of the better houses on the farm. It was one of the two houses which were fitted with lights and electric plugs. It consisted of two rooms: a bedroom in which the parents and three children slept and a kitchen/lounge. It was fitted with a wood-burning stove.

Worker C2 said that the workers had asked Manager C to improve their houses. His response, according to Worker C2 (1989) was that "if he builds us a bigger house, then we'll have too many children. And he doesn't want that on the farm" (20)

Worker C1 (1989) said that the farmer had told him that "he doesn't have land to build on. It's all planted full of trees" (21).

(19)Original: "is nie wat van die beste is nie. ...Dis maar net die lig. ...Die water is buitekant, ...die toilette sit omtrent 20 meter van die huise af, ...en as mens toilet toe moet gaan die tyd van die jaar, loop jy omtrent so diep in die water; baie mozzies hierdie plek het hier waar ons bly."

(20) Original: "Hy sê maak hy 'n groter huis, dan het ons nou weer te veel kinders. En hy wil dit nie hê op die plaas nie."

(21) Original: "hy het nie grond om te bou. Alles is vol bome geplant."

On Farm D, the original houses had two rooms and a kitchen with a fireplace. There was no running water and the toilet was outside the semi-detached house. The upgrading of the housing began in the early 1980's when a new batch of houses was built. These had two bedrooms, a lounge and a kitchen. They were all fitted with electricity as well as hot water, showers, water-borne sewage and toilets inside the house. Then, in 1987 the old houses were upgraded to include the same facilities

5.4.1.1.1. African Workers' Housing

It seems that only 'coloured' permanent workers' housing had initially been improved while African migrant workers still lived in unchanged bad conditions on most farms. This was affected by the number of migrant workers that were employed. On Farm A and D where larger groups of African workers were employed, there were very distinct differences between African and coloured workers' housing. On Farm A, all the African workers employed were migrant workers and so lived in 'single quarters'. Manager A (1989b) explained to me that

"because they were coming for shorter periods, there was not, up-lifting wise, being done for them what's being done for the coloureds, who are your permanent people. But now we've built a hall for them; as I showed you the other day; and now we're going to upgrade the whole living standards and everything".

Manager A said that management was trying to develop a high

return-rate of migrant workers, on a longer contract, and so they were trying to make living conditions more attractive.

On Farm D there was the similar situation where, Manager D1 (1989) said,

"We must now go and spend some money on our bantu houses because that needs to be upgraded and then we'll go back to the coloureds again".

At the time I visited Farm D, the single-quarter rooms were very small but management was planning to change the housing arrangements. On this farm, since the repeal of the influx control laws in 1986, management had increasingly also employed African migrant workers' wives. The upgrading that was planned therefore included the provision of family housing. This would be achieved, according to Manager D1, by putting a door between two previous single-quartered rooms and making the two rooms into one family unit.

The workers had cold showers and pit toilets. Explaining the future upgrading to me, Manager D1 (1989) said that

"It is a difficult decision to make, whether to give them nice pit toilets, or whether to actually put in flush toilets that they will possibly break because they don't know how to use them. That I've still got to see."

On Farms B and C, there was no difference in the conditions of

housing for African and coloured workers. On Farm B, the African migrant workers were employed as single men, so a group of four workers would share a house of equal quality of the coloured workers' houses. But they were also three houses in which three African families could live and the migrant workers took it in turns to have their families down from the bantustans.

On Farm C, as I explained, there were only two African workers, who lived permanently on the farm and who had 'married into' the 'coloured' community and so were not treated differently.

5.4.1.2. Community Facilities

The standard of community facilities also differed from farm to farm and, again, standards on Farms A and B were much better. On Farm A, the coloured workers and the African workers had their 'own' community halls. Both had a television installed although the coloured workers also had a video. (The African workers could attend the video shows). A creche and preschool complex had recently been completed and so the old creche building had been made available for the liaison committee to use.

On Farm B there was only one community hall which was used as a creche, for liaison committee meetings as well as for general community meetings and get-togethers. Management's intention was to build a community hall and have the creche separate.

On Farm C the shed that had been used for packing fruit was made

into the community hall. It had had a ceiling put in and a television set and heater had been provided by Manager C. While the hall was used for community get-togethers, it seemed to be mainly used for church services as many of the workers had recently converted to church groups of different types.

There were only six children of creche-going age on the farm. According to Manager C (1989), government legislation stipulated that if a child care set-up had six or more children in it, it had to be registered, unless half the children were related to the child-minder. Many of the workers on Farm C were related to each other so more than half the children in the 'creche' were relatives.

There was therefore no established creche with a trained teacher on the farm. Worker C2 (1989) indicated that the workers were wanting a proper creche;

"If we had a creche it would have been very nice. Then a person could have worked nicely. Then you aren't worried because your child is nice and warm, your child has its milk, everything. We must have it" (22)

But even though the manager would clearly gain from the establishment of such a creche, in that the workers would work better knowing their children were safe, it did not seem to be a priority for him. So, either a grandmother, a pregnant mother or

(22) Original: "As ons 'n creche gehad het, was dit baie lekker gewees het, dan sal 'n mens lekker gewerk het. Dan is 'n mens nie bekommerd nie, want jou kind is lekker warm, die kind het sy melkies als. Ons moet dit het."

the mother of a newborn took responsibility for child-minding and this person was paid her normal basic wage.

On Farm D, the community facilities were also very limited. As regards the community hall, Manager D1 (1989) told me that

"the community asked for a hall. But then the church people said they wouldn't go to church in the same hall that they partied in. So, very stupidly, I think this is the most ridiculous idea, the size of the hall was cut in half and one half put at the one end and the other half at the other end. And it's so small. The church is in beautiful condition ... but the hall is disgusting. They break everything. We put in a T.V. which they paid for half ... They do want a nice community hall, they've asked for one but I don't know if it will work. "

There was also a creche on the farm which management had started. Manager D1 (1989) said that she felt that it was very successful because,

"I have very little to do with it anymore. I go there twice a week, and that's basically to offload the food that I have to go and buy. But they run it on their own and they do it very well."

As on all the four farms in the sample, the women who ran the creche got paid the normal wage for women on the farm.

The standard of housing and community facilities thus varied on

the different farms and it was noticeable that on Farms A and B where training was emphasised, there had also been much upgrading of workers' living conditions. On Farm C, even though the farmer had been a member of the ECDA since its inception and expressed a commitment to upgrading the workers' conditions, the actual conditions in which the workers live remained bad.

5.4.2. Committees and Community activities

The initial purpose for which the farmers formed the ECDA was to encourage different 'free-time' activities amongst the workers. On those farms in the case study, most of the committees and activities which existed had been introduced through the initiative of the ECDA developers. I have examined a number of these - liaison committees, women's clubs, youth clubs, sport, religion and on-farm community developers.

5.4.2.1. Liaison Committees

The most important committees introduced on the farms were the liaison committees. On each of the farms, liaison committees had at least been attempted, while on both Farms A and B, the liaison committees were well established (having started on Farm A, in the mid seventies, for example).

The committees have a number of roles. Firstly on both Farms A and B, the committees were responsible for most community related issues, which included the power to discipline workers. On Farm A, for example, Worker A2 (1989) told me

"At the weekends, you can have your drink. But if you've made a 'big scene', if you've had too much, then the committee decides on Monday night" (23).

The farm has a rule that the coloured workers are not allowed in the African compound. (24). This rule meant, Worker A2 (1989) continued, that "if the committee has had to come and fetch you at the compound - then they are entitled to fine you R30" (25) (Worker A2, 1989).

So the committees have the power to discipline workers for breaking farm rules and disturbing the peace. This disciplining can be quite severe. On Farm B, Manager B (1989) explained the procedure:

"You still find that there are a few that go off. But they are aware of it and we don't try and hide it that if they are caught staggering on the road, then we are going to take steps. If the committee says we must fire the chap, they must have gone through all the rigmarole already if it's a serious case. I mean they warn the chap once, twice. They've got their rules and regulations" (My emphasis).

Secondly, the committee has another role. Manager B (1989) said that

"If there is any outing that they want to organise -

(23) Original: "Naweke kan jy nou jou dop drink. As jy nou groot gemaak het, as jy nou te veel gevat het, dan besluit die kommittee Maandag aand."

(24) See 'Farm Rules' in Appendix Two

(25) Original: "Die reel, as die kommittee jou gaan haal het daar in die kompond, dan is hy geregtig op 'n R30 fine."

sporting and just visiting Cape Town, on the beaches - it will be done through the committee, not directly by management".

The committees therefore perform an initiating and coordinating role for events taking place in the community, by arranging transport and other things necessary for outings. The funding for this generally comes partly from management and partly from the workers.

A third important aspect of the liaison committees on Farms A and B is that they articulate workers' demands. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six suffice it to say here that farmworkers had not previously had any formal structure through which any demands could be articulated. Now, on Farm B, for example, Worker B1 (1989) said that the workers

"have a committee which represents them. They go to management if they want certain things - if they want a field, a place to play or anything like that. Then the committee gets it. Then the answer gets approved. So far, everything that we have here we have received through the committee" (26).

On both Farms C and D, there had been an attempt to establish

(26) Original: "het 'n kommittee wat vir hulle in tree. Hulle gaan bestuur toe as hulle sekere dinge wil hê - hulle soek 'n terrein of 'n speel plek of enige iets soos daai. Dan kry die kommittee dit. Dan word die antwoord goedgekeur. So ver, alles wat hier is het ons als gekry deur die kommittee."

committees but in both cases, the committee soon disbanded. On Farm C, the committee was elected but before it could meet the chairperson was fired for driving a farm vehicle drunk. Worker C2 (1989) told me that, "that's how it all ended. Now everything is dead quiet" (27).

The division between 'drinkers' and 'religious people' was the reason given for why the committee had not restarted. Manager C wanted Worker C1 to be the chairperson, because he was considered to be the most loyal. Many other workers, however did not want him because he was a 'drinker'. These divisions are very complex, however, and I discuss them further in Chapter Six.

On Farm D, the breakdown of the committee was said, by Worker D2 (1989), to be because "they did not understand this business" (28). Manager D1 (1989) explained her impression:

"All we asked them to do was weekend duty for guests, we used to have a signing-in book, just to have control. But they took it too far. They used to write little red letters if this one was drunk and that one was drunk... They became like policemen!"

It seems therefore that from the outset the committee only had a disciplinary role; that is to keep control. The other two roles (that we saw with the committees on Farms A and B), that of

(27) Original: "so het dit als geeindig, als is toe doodstil."

(28) Original: "hulle het die besigheid nie verstaan nie".

organising social events and, articulating workers' demands, were not allowed by management. It could not therefore develop any support from the workers more generally, because it did not help them in any way.

5.4.2.2. Women's Clubs

On Farm A, Manager A (1989) said, "we've got one of the biggest clubs in Elgin, our women here". As I explained earlier, the women on Farm A work weekly shifts during the off-season (one week on, one week off). It is especially during that part of the year, May to October, that the women's club operates. Those women that are not working attend sessions with the women's club, for example sewing, cooking classes and other domestic orientated activities. The club has a committee and this committee sends representatives to a monthly meeting at the ECDA offices with representatives of women's clubs from other farms. A similar situation exists on Farm B.

On Farm C, on the other hand, some of the women got together and tried to form a women's club. They met once, arranged a video and cake sale and made a profit of R70 from the venture (Worker C2 1989). However, because of a number of reasons including the farmer's lack of enthusiasm as well as divisions amongst workers, they did not meet again.

On Farm D, the women's club was dependent on management. Manager D1 (1989) told me that

"Once a month I got in lecturers on cooking and things like that, during working hours for them, for an hour and a half till lunchtime and that I think went down extremely well". Besides this however, the club didn't meet and if the ECDA had a meeting, Manager D1 would merely appoint two women to go.

5.4.2.3. Youth Clubs

The success of the youth clubs followed a similar pattern. On Farm A, there was a club for teenagers. They had coffee bars, panel discussions, outings and camps. There was also a club for the younger children. These youth were also part of a regional organisation, the Ecological Kids Club (29), that also took the children on outings and camps to study nature.

Each of these clubs had a committee which planned and carried out the various activities for the youth. It was mainly with these committees that the ECDA community developers worked. According to Developer 2 (1989), the aim was, among other things, to

"give them some names and addresses and telephone numbers of people, and they must learn to contact the people themselves. If I leave here one day, I don't want them to say, 'Oh, it's a pity that John is gone. Then they must go on themselves, they must stand on their own feet."

On Farm B there was a well-functioning youth club for teenagers, while on Farm C there was no youth club at all.

(30) Not connected to the Rural Foundation.

Manager D1 (1989) gave me her impression of the youth on that farm and told me about her attempts to start a club:

"Youth clubs - I don't think we've got nice young kids here at all. I really don't. They're really spoilt. But maybe because they're teenagers, they all go through that and you immediately take it that they are just.... I mean they don't throw stones at the cars (on the national road), they throw our blooming fruit at the cars. ...I tried to do the whole thing on sex education. Didn't support it at all. The only kids who wanted to come to it, because it was a film, was an eleven year old who had to be sent home".

5.4.2.4. Sport

The community developers organised many sport events on an area level and regional level, including cycling competitions, athletics and rugby games. The Rural Foundation, more broadly (and in co-operation with the marketing co-operative, Unifruco), has an annual athletics day when all the individual community development associations' best athletes compete against each other (Developer 2, 1989).

Organised sport seemed to be the first way in which the community developers tried to develop the community. On Farms A and B where there had been a lot of community development, organised sport seemed to have been in existence for a long time. Manager A (1989) said, that on Farm A,

"(All) our sport and that type of thing has been standing

long before the ECDA. We are members of the Groenland Rugby Union, we are members of the Hottentots Holland Netball Union. Those clubs, they function on their own like hell!"

On these farms the sport activities often operated independently of the ECDA developer's help. The sport clubs had committees and these committees were represented on the liaison committee. On Farm B, there were fewer workers. Thus, although there were sports clubs, they were not as large and as well organised as on Farm A, in that they did not have committees. If transport or equipment was needed for example, it was organised through the liaison committee rather than by a club committee.

On Farm C, the ECDA developers were involved. Manager C (1989) explained that

"I haven't got the... sport facilities or other types of facilities here, which I wanted, to encourage our farm children and also our men to participate in some sort of activity rather than sitting drinking. ...Through the ECDA we have done a lot of tug of wars and that sort of thing. ...A couple of them play soccer, as long as they are occupied".

On Farm D, Manager D1 (1989) told me that

"They've got their rugby club ...and their netball club. I've never had to get involved in that at all. ...I mean

I've asked about it, showed interest but I've never had to actually do it for them, they've done it all on their own.

Management did, however, get involved with athletics on Farm D. Manager D1 (1989) explained to me how, in the absence of a liaison committee, management had tried to encourage sport.

"The Deciduous Fruit Board organises once a year, this run. I had eight runners who were going to run. ... And we used to train. The first night they came in gumboots and rugby boots. ... They made half the money and we bought them T-shirt and tennis tackies ... and off we went the whole blooming farm. Well, the runners were fantastic but the spectators ... it was a free for all - they've got beer tents. ... Our spectators spoilt the whole thing. ... so then I said to them that's it, the next year only the runners will go. And when I put the notice up for training starting, nobody was interested."

It is possible that, once it became clear that management directly controlled their involvement in and their enjoyment of athletics, the workers resisted. Management D1's (1989) response was that

"I just said to them 'That's fine - I'm upset that none of you are keen but you're not spiting me, 'cos in that weekend I can go away'".

On those farms then where sport was more developed, the clubs had

committees and these committees were represented on the liaison committee. On other farms, like Farm C, there were no clubs, and no co-ordinating structures and so organised sport happened in an ad hoc way, often only when stimulated by an outside force like the ECDA developers.

5.4.2.5. Religion

The Rural Foundation encourages the development of religious activity. Developer 2, responsible for sport and recreation in Elgin, for example, had been trained at a bible school and had had some years experience working with religious youth before joining the Rural Foundation.

On all the farms, there seemed to have been an increase in religious activity since the ECDA began. On Farm A, Worker A1 (1989) told me that the majority now go to church. On Farm B, Manager B (1989) said that for

"everybody wanting to attend a church in the village there is transport available. But most of them belong to some church that they have on the premises".

On Farm C, Manager C (1989) said that since the ECDA started working on the farm, "we've had such an influx of people going to different sorts of churches and that occupied their whole weekend".

On Farm C, as I have mentioned already, there seemed to be an

antagonism between those workers who had become 'religious' and those that remained 'drinkers'. I discuss this division in more depth in chapter six, but it is important to note here that it seemed that as more and more workers have become religious, the antagonism against 'drinkers' had increased.

On Farm D, there had also been a recent increase in the number of converted workers. This workers' community also seemed divided between the religious and non-religious workers although not with the same level of antagonism.

5.4.2.6. Community Developers

A final development on the farms is that of a community developer on the farm itself. Only Manager A had someone employed in this position. Manager A (1989) said that he had suggested to the other members at the previous annual general meeting of the ECDA that instead of spending more money on another ECDA developer, farmers should rather

"spend your bleddie money on your farm, identify somebody that knows your setup, on the same level as your people."

These people would then be "trained for grassroots work" (Manager A, 1989) by the ECDA developers and coordinate all development work on the farm. Manager A was in the process of trying to persuade other ECDA executive members about the value of on-farm developers so that the training of such people becomes part of the ECDA's development process.

Conclusion

I have tried in this chapter to describe the different changes that have occurred on the four farms in Elgin. On each of the farms, management emphasised different aspects of these changes.

The Rural Foundation's attitude to this, expressed in terms of 'community development', and explained to me by Bosman (1986), was that

"You must look at the whole community and at all its different aspects. You must look at education, at health, at culture, at social problems and leadership development. Otherwise you are creating a skew situation that can only have negative repercussions in the future".

On Farms A and B management emphasised training, and especially 'attitude' training; better payment and pay structures; improved housing conditions as well as clubs and societies. These were therefore much more in line with the RF's thinking.

By contrast, the situation on Farms C and D represented a much narrower attempt at changing workers' conditions. On Farm C, management relied almost completely on financial incentives, while on Farm D, management used various incentives and also improved workers' living conditions.

I have presented a picture of the different changes on the farms. An analysis of these changes, in an attempt to establish both the underlying reasons for their introduction and the desired effects, will be presented in Chapter Six.

CHAPTER SIX

THE MEANING OF THE CHANGES

6.1 Introduction

In Chapter Five I described the changes that management had been introducing on the four farms I researched. In this Chapter I argue that these changes were introduced as an attempt by management to increase profits through, most importantly, improving the productivity of workers. I discussed in Chapters Two and Four that there was a profitability crisis in agriculture in the late 1970's and early 1980's and it was this crisis that motivated management in Elgin to develop measures to try to increase profits.

According to the Labour Research Service (LRS) profits can only be increased in three ways:

1. by increasing sales;
2. by increasing the price;
3. by reducing the cost of production. (1)

I discussed in Chapter 4 that some managements tried to increase sales by planting new orchards and grafting new varieties which give a greater yield per tree. For individual farmers to increase the price is difficult because prices are negotiated by the marketing cooperative, Unifruco. Increased prices would therefore happen on an industry-wide level. So for the farmers in Elgin the third way, that of reducing production costs, became crucial, especially in the 1980's.

The LRS says the most important inputs in the production process

(1) In Productivity (1989:30)

are labour, machinery and raw materials. In the production process,

"Workers apply their labour to the raw material and with the assistance of the machinery, they produce motor cars or steel plating or brass screws." (2)

In order to reduce production costs, therefore, this production process has to be cheapened. This is achieved either through paying less for the labour, raw materials or machinery required, or by increasing the productivity. The L.R.S. explains productivity as being the units of output per units of input and says that productivity increases if, for example,

"the same number of motor cars are produced with fewer inputs of labour or raw materials or more motor cars are produced with the same inputs of labour or raw materials or machinery." (3)

I argue in this Chapter that the managements on the farms used two main methods of reducing costs. Firstly they tried to reduce labour costs by changing the composition of the bulk of the workforce from 'permanent' coloured men to 'casual' women (coloured and African) and African migrant men.

Secondly, and at the same time, they tried to increase productivity by focusing on "efficiency" and "control".

Managements' efforts to influence these two dimensions on a practical level were to introduce measures which aimed to

(2) In Productivity (1989:7)

(3) In Productivity (1989:7)

1. improve the 'quality' (4) and stability of the workforce, and
2. develop a new authority structure.

Before I discuss the various measures introduced around these aims, it is important to clarify the terms "efficiency" and "control".

I said in Chapter One that the capitalist has to ensure that the production process is co-ordinated so as to reduce wastage and facilitate the optimal use of the various resources. On the farms, increasing this efficiency was a crucial aspect of the change introduced by management and included measures like training and incentives.

On Farms A and B, for example, training courses for top management, middle management, the supervisors and workers had been arranged. Manager A (1989) said that "Once you get you supervisor trained then he can take better care of your work."

Through the training of middle management and supervisors, management had been trying to develop a much closer monitoring of the actual process of production. By training workers and giving them an understanding of the whole production process, management hoped to improve the smooth running of the process and thus

(4) This phrase, 'the quality of the workforce', shows managements' attitude that workers are merely units of labour. I have used it because it also indicates the new concerns of management. In the past, farmers wanting cheap, unskilled labour, were not as concerned with efficiency and so used the dop-system as a means to lock workers onto the farms. In the present, managers aim to get efficient and careful work out of the workers, using the various measures I discuss to do so.

reduce wastage of time and resources. Production incentives were used by all the managers in an attempt to increase the speed with which workers worked and in that way improve the efficiency of the process.

In terms of control, I explained in Chapter One, that workers' attitudes - their willingness to work - directly affects their productivity. So management under capitalism has developed various control measures with which they try to motivate workers. Management's attempts to control must be understood as including a range of measures that management can use simultaneously on the same group of workers. These include:

"Coercive power, social conditioning, manipulative persuasion, unilateral attempts to gauge and satisfy employee 'needs' in so far as this serves management interests by evoking desirable employee attitudes and, finally bilateral consultation and negotiation between management and employee representatives." (Fox, 1985:15)

I explained in Chapter Two that the dop-system had been one of the more important methods through which farmers tried to control the workers on their farms. Keeping workers in a state of semi-drunkeness firstly trapped the unskilled workers that the farmers needed in the sector by inhibiting their initiative to progress. Secondly, because of the addictive nature of alcohol, farmers were able to coerce workers into working by using 'dop' as a motivating factor. Scharf (1984:205) says that

"(T)he craving for liquor, historically induced by the wine

farmers, mystifies the use of liquor as a control mechanism. By craving it and continuously consuming liquor the labourers are perpetually consenting to their own subjugation, and underdevelopment."

Further, on those farms that used the dop-system, it was common that the dop system was used together with other forms of coercion like evictions and beating.

My argument in this chapter is that the fields of change described in Chapter Five indicate a shift away from an emphasis on coercive measures. The managements on the farms in the sample have rather been trying to develop the supportive side of the workers' 'will and motivation'; that is the workers' consent to managements' authority. Burawoy (1981) (5) has indicated that consent includes

"psychological and other processes through which subordination to capital is secured, the processes through which workers came to comply with and otherwise advance their own dehumanisation."

In trying to understand the changes on the farms this concept of consent was helpful but it also presented difficulties. Many of the workers did not say anything antagonistic about management and some of the responses to my questions included very supportive statements about management. Worker A3 (1989), for example, when I asked about unions said that he did not think they were necessary on the farm because

(5) Quoted in Thompson (1983:153).

"We are better off with management. We can talk heart to heart with management. We can work our problems out together." (6)

But did this mean that the workers were always supportive and loyal to management? It was clear that workers were not and, in fact, could decide to be directly antagonistic to management - for example there was a work-stoppage at Farm B. The question was, therefore, what was it that motivated workers to consent to managements authority when they were being exploited in this relationship? There seemed to be a number of reasons for this. Firstly, workers expressed loyalty because, on one level, workers' relationships with their employers are also supportive in the context of competition with other capitalists (7). On another level workers received a number of benefits from the relationship - for example improved housing. Secondly, workers' consent emerges out of an attempt to cope with a bad situation - called 'making out', and which I discuss shortly.

I would argue that management on these farms was aware of these aspects of workers motivation about their work and used them to try to develop workers' consent. It has done this in two ways. Firstly, it does this by submitting to certain demands of the workers, such as those expressed through the liaison committees, and by providing benefits like improved living conditions and

(6) Original : "Ons is meer gelukkig saam met die bestuur. Ons kan van harte met die bestuur praat. Ons kan saam ons sake oplos."

(7) I discuss this in Chapter One.

training and developing internal labour markets. (I will discuss this term later in this chapter). Importantly, these benefits are accompanied by an ideological thrust to develop a particular form of cohesion amongst workers and between workers and management and the idea of a common purpose on the farm.

A second way in which management hopes to develop consent is through encouraging the activity of 'making out' amongst workers. 'Making out' is the development of games and practices by workers in an effort to cope with their daily work situation. Burawoy (1979:85) explains that

"making out cannot be understood simply in terms of the externally derived goal of achieving greater earnings. Rather, its dominance in the shop floor culture emerges out of and is embodied in a specific set of relationships in production that in turn reflect management's interest in generating profit. The rewards of making out are defined in terms of factors immediately related to the labour process - reduction of fatigue, passing time, relieving boredom, and so on - and factors that emerge from the labour process - the social and psychological rewards of making out on a tough job."

I was alerted to a number of ways in which workers 'make-out' on the farms, most importantly when they were picking under the piece-rate incentive. On Farm C, for example, while picking, workers voluntarily divided into two teams in order to compete against each other. Some of these ways were encouraged by manage-

ment while others the workers developed themselves.(8). In these two broad ways then, management has been trying to develop workers' consent to their authority.

At the same time as encouraging the development of consent, however, management on the farms has maintained and introduced other more directly coercive measures to control workers. These included rules, fines, threats of dismissal from their jobs and eviction from their newly-improved houses. (9)

These coercive measures can be used to enforce a specific demand by management, but they are not brought to bear only when workers withdraw their consent. They are always present, available for use if management so desires, and as such are also intended to discourage resistance and to regulate workers' lives more generally. Further as part of their attempt to regulate workers more broadly, management has developed a new authority structure which includes supervisors as well as the liaison committees.

What I have tried to show in this discussion is that management

(8) I discuss this again later.

(9) These threats must be understood in the broader societal context where, firstly, according to Kreiner of the Cape Town City Council (reported in Argus : 16 May 1990),

"(U)nemployment statistics in greater Cape Town were frightening - about 270 000 people had been unemployed two years ago and the figure had grown since then."

(Cape Town is seventy kilometers away from Grabouw. (See Appendix 3)). Secondly, the estimated, urban, housing shortage was one-million units in 1986 (de Vos of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, CSIR, reported in Pretoria News : 9 May, 1990) and in Pineview, the local, coloured township in Grabouw, Louw (1987,25) found that "Some people have already been on the waiting list for 14 years". There is no clear evidence to suggest that the housing situation might have changed since 1986.

tries to maintain control over workers in different ways under capitalist production. While seeing consent and coercion as different forms, it is important to regard the process of control as a whole. Thus, when I discuss different ways in which management tries to develop consent, it must be remembered that coercive measures are operating at the same time, and vice versa.

I will now look at management's attempts to reduce labour costs by changing the composition of the workforce. Then I discuss the attempts at increasing productivity through the different measures introduced to improve the quality and stability of the workers and develop a new authority structure.

In considering the issues raised in this chapter it is important to point out that the discussion uses the participants' perceptions of the measures. The actual success or failure of these measures in terms of increases in productivity as well as the longer term reaction of workers to these processes has not been the focus of study. These will have to be determined through future research.

6.2 Cutting Costs

I have described how fruit farming has large seasonal fluctuations in labour requirements. During the picking season on Farm A, for example, 50% more workers were needed. These positions had been filled, in the past, by the dependants of the permanent, male, coloured workers, as well as by male, African migrant workers. Thus it was only the male, coloured workers that were

employed throughout the year.

Over the last fifteen years, each of the farms in the case study had been changing the composition of the labour force to include women and/or migrant workers throughout the whole year. On Farm A, in the past, the women on the farm had only been employed during the picking season and most African, male, migrant workers were employed for short, four-month contracts during the picking season. The women had since been employed, full-time, for longer periods during the year and during the less-busy period (from June to September), they were employed for every alternate week. The number of African, male, migrant workers were being increased from 48 to about 80 and the shortest contract was to be eight months. (Manager A :1986.b)

On Farm B, seasonal workers had included the women on the farm, as well as some employed from the local coloured township and from the bantustans. Manager B (1989) told me that they had changed this to the situation where all the women work throughout the year and African migrant workers were employed on twelve month contracts. Also, some of the migrant workers wives, who were staying on the farm, were also employed.

On Farm C, the fruit had previously been packed on the farm. The women on the farm had done this and African, male, migrant workers as well as coloured male and female workers from the local township were employed to help with the picking. Management had changed this so that all the women on the farm, and no outsiders, were employed throughout the year.

On Farm D, the situation for many years had been that coloured workers were in the fruit section and African workers in the animal section. This was still the case when I visited, but in both sections women were increasingly being employed; coloured women in the fruit section, African women in the animal section.

These different workers did the same, or similar, work as the coloured, male, 'permanent' workers but management paid them less. I now look at the different categories and discuss how management explained their differential payment and how management thus decreased costs.

6.2.1. Women

Women, be they African or coloured, were employed as "casual" workers even though they worked throughout the year. Manager C (1989) explained how this helped to cut his costs.

"All women work and although it is on a permanent basis I call them casuals, 'cause when it rains then they don't get paid. The husband, what, it can snow, he gets his wage per day, even if there is no work done. But our actual labour force is more women than men."

Management therefore used its power to categorise women as "casuals" to pay them less. This was especially important on Farm C where there were more women than men employed.

The overriding justification that management used in paying women less however was on the basis of the gender division of labour. The consequences of this was that women were treated separately

and got a lower wage because they were women.

Manager D1 (1989) told me that the general labourers on the farms were divided, in terms of pay structures, into "three categories and women".

Manager D1 (1989), explained that in the previous season

"the bottom people (men) got one helluva increase, but the women are still ... um... the husband must earn more than the wife".

Manager D1 was saying that it was due to gender differences amongst the workers themselves that management paid women less. Worker C1 (1989), however told me that women should get the same wage as men, "because they do the same type of work that the men do".(10)

Although Worker C1 might have felt this way, it can not be presumed that all the workers on the farms shared the same understanding. What Worker C1's words do alert us to, though, is that management did use gender divisions for their own purposes to decrease the wage bill.

Management was able to reduce these wages because of the lack of employment alternatives for women resident on farms. It is common that the male 'permanent' worker is employed with the proviso that his dependant will be available to work (11). Women generally cannot get employment off the farm for any length of time - as

(10) Original : "Want hulle doen dieselfde tipe werk wat die mans doen."

(11) See Appendix Two : Marcus (1986:163 and 177); Haysom and Thompson (1986:231)

they have to be there when management requires their labour (Peterson,1976:8). Combined with this, the fact that the 'coloured labour preference' policy had generally excluded African men and women in the past has made "Coloured women one of the cheapest source of adult waged labour there. (in the Western Cape)" (Marcus,1986:179)

Management also reduced their wage bill by employing African women. This only occurred on Farm D. (African women were also employed on Farm B but there was no additional financial discrimination on the basis of race on that farm, so all women got the same reduced wage).

The employment of African women was a new development in the area as until 1986, they were not allowed in the area in terms of the general influx control regulations (12).

Manager D1 (1989) told me that these changes in legislation meant that on Farm D,

"We've allowed them (male migrant workers) to have a wife, or whatever she might be, with them. So we have five, six black women also working".

These women's wages were, therefore, affected by their 'casual' status, their gender and their race. On Farm D the wage categories were as follows:

- 'permanent', coloured male workers were paid R14.00 a day;
- coloured women were paid R8 a day;

(12) See Chapter 2.

- African women were paid R7 a day.

Management was able to do this, again, because of the vulnerability of these women. For African women in South Africa, agriculture has been one of the two largest sectors in which women have been able to find employment (Bird, 1985:79). Marcus (1986:179) says that because employment in other sectors has been effectively blocked to them they have been forced to find work in agriculture, whatever the wages.

The recent relaxation of influx control and the coloured labour preference policy has meant that the Western Cape has become another area in which African women can legally look for employment. At the same time however, it has provided management with another way to depress wages further in the area. It may be, therefore, that as more and more women leave the bantustans in search of employment elsewhere, African women will become a much greater part of the workforce on these farms.

6.2.2. Migrant Workers

The second way in which management tried to decrease the wage bill was by employing African migrant workers. Migrant workers were employed on farms A, B and D while Manager C only employed women to bolster the 'permanent' workers (13).

Decreasing the wage bill through using migrant workers was

(13) It is important to note here that migrant workers were not considered 'casual'. Once they were employed they were treated in a similar way to the 'permanent', coloured, male workers in that if rain inhibited work, for example, they were paid their full wage.

achieved in three ways. Firstly, as I have said, due to the seasonal fluctuations in fruit farming, greater numbers of workers are required during certain parts of the year. Some managements, as on Farm A for example, employed a group of migrant workers just for that season. This meant that those workers only had to be paid for those few months in the year - what happened to these workers during the rest of the year was of no concern to management - and thus management's wage bill was less than if they employed workers for the whole year.

Secondly African migrant workers were paid less than coloured workers even when they were on a full year's contract (except on Farm B). I would argue that management justifies these lower wages through a combination of

- 1) race discrimination, Africans get paid less;
- 2) the fact that they were employed as 'single' workers even though they may have had families in the homelands;
- 3) the fact that they were migrant workers and not part of the 'permanent' core even if they had been returning on yearly contracts to the same farm for 15 years.(14)

The relative importance of each category above in determining the wage structure is difficult to assess, but they do all contribute towards lowering wages of African migrant workers' considerably. On farm D, for example, the wage differences between coloured and African male workers in 1989 were R14 per day for coloured male general labourers, R12.50 per day for the highest paid African,

(14) As had Worker A5.

male general labour and R8 per day for the lowest paid African, male workers.

A third way in which management tried to cut costs by employing migrant workers was through the type of housing provided for them. On all the farms I visited management provided housing for all the workers. On Farm B, for example, single migrant workers were employed on yearly contracts and lived in the 'family' houses. Four migrant workers therefore shared one 'family' house rather than only one 'permanent' worker and one 'casual' worker, as was the case with coloured worker families. Employing single migrant workers therefore decreased costs because housing did not have to be provided for the workers' families.

Marcus (1986:177), when discussing the employment of women on farms in South Africa, says that it is the cost of the labour power of male farm workers "which is the standard around which other sellers of labour power are evaluated". In a similar way, management on the four farms I visited developed a standard around the cost of the labour power of coloured, male, 'permanent' workers. Thus, even though women and migrant workers did the same work as coloured, male general labourers, management lowered the cost of women and migrant workers' labour power using social characteristics of gender, race and migrancy and the vulnerability of workers in these positions. In this way then management reduced its labour bill.

6.3 Developing a 'high-quality'(15), stable labour force

Improving productivity was one of the major ways in which management in Elgin tried to increase profits. This meant that there developed an increasing emphasis on trying to develop better trained, more efficient workers who were supportive of management.

Management was trying to do this with all the workers employed - the permanent, coloured, male workers, the migrant workers, and the coloured and African women workers. But as more money was spent on training and better living conditions management tried to encourage those workers to remain on the farm. In this section I will discuss the various measures that management has introduced to try to improve this 'quality' and stability of the work force. These measures include

- a) Selection of workers;
- b) 'Life enrichment';
- c) Individualisation;
- d) Development of internal labour markets and;
- e) Stabilising migrants.

6.3.1. Selection of Workers

Management on the farms I visited had become more consciously selective about the workers that they employed on the farms. This occurred in two ways - firstly in terms of whether the workers were alcoholic, and secondly, in terms of workers presenting a

(15) I discuss this term in the introduction to this chapter.

challenge to management power.

6.3.1.1. I explained in Chapter Two that the dop-system had been used in the Western Cape as an important form of labour control. This system encouraged the development of an alcoholism problem in the area as a whole such that even if a particular management had never provided 'dop' on the farm there might still be a drinking problem amongst the workers. The NTI official, Jones-Phillipson (1989) said that in Grabouw, even though management had generally "moved right away from that (the dop system) there are still the social evils - the drink".

With the increasing emphasis on efficient workers, those workers who were still suffering the consequences of managements' previous labour control methods and were alcoholics, were being forced off farms. Manager C (1989) said that in the attempt at increasing productivity,

"it is obviously a matter of getting rid of labour rather than trying to improve some of them. Some of them you can't improve; they are bad eggs and you've got to get rid of the bad eggs before you can deal with the others".

Thus management tries to "get rid of bad eggs" already part of the workforce. But management also developed its selection techniques. This occurred in a number of ways. Firstly, on Farm D, for example, Manager D1 (1989) told me that management had decided not to upgrade five of the older houses on the farm. They did this so that when new workers were employed they would first live in those houses so that management could assess how they

lived. If these workers had sufficiently sober habits they were given better houses - otherwise they were dismissed.

On Farm A, Manager A (1989.b) said that although he made the final decision about a worker's employment, since the training of the supervisors and the establishment of the liaison committee, he generally consulted those groups about newly employed worker's working abilities and living standards. He said that there had been occasions when he had fired a worker because of their assessment of the worker. (16)

These selection techniques have meant that, according to Manager D2 (1989),

"Productivity has possibly been increased in the sense that dinkum riff-raff is no longer being employed".

For workers, I would argue, it has meant that those workers that remain alcoholics are being forced into a situation of unemployment or into employment on farms that still practice the dop system as a form of control.

6.3.1.2 Each of the managements I spoke to indicated that they expected that unions would try to organise the workers on those farms. In anticipation of this management had, for example, had meetings with workers about unions (see introduction to Chapter 5). But at the same time management had tried to make sure that those workers that they did employ were not organising the workers. On Farm B for example, the workers had called a stoppage

(16) After a probation period.

in the 1988 thinning season and management said that it was called by a particular worker. Manager B (1989) explained what happened.

"You will find the rotten egg, and they at NTI will tell you exactly who the rotten egg is. They can notice very quickly. I mean it's not that you don't notice but how to approach the rotten egg - they helped us a lot in that.

We had a problem in the season where they called a strike - not because everybody wanted to, but because that chap pushed them into it. Then we just waited till the season was over, and we dismissed him and that's what happened to him."

With the focus on developing a high quality, stable and loyal workforce, then, management was increasingly selective about the workers they employed and, as I have tried to show, had no qualms about dismissing those that did not fulfill those requirements.

6.3.2 Life Enrichment

In Chapter 5, I discussed the various changes that management had been introducing - including skills training, attitude training, incentives, as well as better housing and facilities. I have used the term 'life enrichment' to describe these changes because the changes affect workers' living and working conditions. 'Life enrichment' is not a new strategy used by management in capitalist enterprises. Some of the aspects of upgrading that I observed on the four farms were characteristic of the Welfare approach to management in the early decades of this century in Great Britain for example. Fox (1985:76) explains

that the approach concerned itself with

"providing cheap nourishing foods in works canteens; appointing welfare supervisors to support and counsel employees in their personal problems; promoting social, sport, and cultural activities; and, in some cases, offering good low cost housing for company workers along, perhaps, with other fringe benefits such as pensions and medical care".

All these aspects were provided on the farms in the sample.

The introduction of the welfare approach in Britain was motivated by a belief on the one hand that "the complex mechanism that is man works better and harder if tended with care" (Fox,1985:76).

While, on the other hand, management hoped to develop

"a new relationship in which the employee offered willing compliance and loyalty to his (sic) employer" (Fox,1985:177).

'Life enrichment' also includes aspects that developed through the "Quality of Life" movement in the early 1970's and which focussed on the design of jobs. 'Good' job design was based on five principles. Littler and Salaman (1984:80-81) listed these. The first was the

"Principle of closure : the scope of the job should include all the tasks neccessary to complete a product or process. Theoretically, the predicted result is that the work acquires an intrinsic meaning and people can feel a sense of

achievement". (1984:80)

On the farms in the case study most of the tasks required a low level of skill and at each stage of the annual cycle the tasks were relatively complete, all general labourers doing similar tasks. (17) The 'closure' of these tasks would, therefore, be difficult. What was important, however, was that, on Farms A and B for example, workers were being trained for these tasks and were given knowledge of the whole production process. I would argue that it was through this training that management was trying to give 'work .. meaning and people .. a sense of self achievement'.

The second principle of good 'job design' was the

"(I)ncorporation of control and monitoring tasks. Jobs should be designed so that an army of inspectors is not required. The individual worker, or the work-team, assume responsibility for quality and reliability." (1984:80)

Again, it was through the training and the stress on the importance of the quality of the fruit that management tried to encourage this type of principle. On Farms A and B, however, there were supervisors who were being trained, and they performed the role of quality controllers, especially, according to Manager B (1989) when workers were working on a piece-rate and were trying to work as fast as possible.

The third 'Quality of Life' principle was

"(T)ask variety, that is an increase in the range of tasks.

(17) See Chapter 4.

This implies a principle of comprehensiveness, which means that workers should understand the general principles of a range of tasks so that job rotation is possible." (1984:81)

Tasks on the farms do rotate all the time because of the seasonal production process and, with the training, workers do have a greater knowledge of all these tasks. While this increased knowledge does seem to make the work more interesting for workers it may be that as workers become familiar with this information and their tasks, because the work is mainly unskilled, task variety on the farms will have a similar effect on farm workers as it did on a chemical worker, in Nichols and Beynon (1977:16), who said

"you move from one boring, dirty monotonous job to another boring, dirty monotonous job. And somehow you're supposed to come out of it all 'enriched'. But I never feel 'enriched' - I just feel knackered."

The fourth principle includes two aspects - the "(s)elf regulation of the speed of work and some choice over work methods and worker sequence." (1984:81)

The speed of work is, generally, dictated by the seasonal cycle, and the demand for quality fruit. The workers don't have much say over the speed because they are paid with the piece-rate for at least half the year and that requires high speed work if they are going to achieve the wages they need. As far as work methods are concerned, it seemed that management, on all the farms, did encourage workers' initiative. This was especially the case on Farm B where they had pre-work sessions every morning, to discuss

problems in the way workers were working. Manager B (1989) said that, in these sessions,

"We've had quite a good response from the chaps. It's not just the instructor talking his head off; they comment there. And that's what we want. We want a free sort of thing. Two-way communication."

Management encourages this initiative about production methods because, I would argue, firstly, workers do develop new and better methods in the daily work and management wants all workers to improve their output using these better methods. Secondly, management hopes that the encouragement of participation will result in greater commitment to the enterprise.

The fifth principle, was to allow for

"(A) job structure that permits some social interaction and, perhaps, cooperation among workers" (1984:81).

This already applied to all jobs on the farms - it was not something that had to be developed. Nevertheless, management did develop various piece-rate incentives that encouraged team work, and thus they encouraged co-operation with the aim of increased production.

My argument is that management on the farms, in a similar way to the 'Welfare approach' and the 'Quality of Life' movement, have introduced 'life enrichment' with the aim of improving the quality and stability of workers which they hoped would improve the efficiency and their control of the labour process.

6.3.2.1 Improving Efficiency with 'Life Enrichment'

In my interviews, management expressed hopes that increased efficiency would result from both aspects of 'life enrichment' - living and working conditions. Improving the living conditions of workers clearly does not have a direct effect on workers methods of work. Manager C (1989) whose focus was on financial incentives and on whose farm the living conditions of workers were relatively bad, nevertheless explained to me how improved living conditions helped increase efficiency. He said that

"in the quality of the housing and electricity, to improve the actual conditions - your quality of labourers improve. Through that you get better productivity because you get more responsibility".

Thus while improving living conditions does not have a direct effect on workers' methods of work, management hoped that through improving workers' living standards workers would be less likely to be alcoholic, have more interest in their work and therefore be more productive while at work. (18)

Management-organised training is directed at developing workers' technical skills as well as at developing workers' knowledge of the production process. Through this combination of skill and knowledge training, management aims to improve workers'

(18) Schärf (1984:187), when discussing productivity on farms that still practiced the 'dop'-system in Stellenbosch, said that Wednesdays and Thursdays were the most productive days of the week while on Monday the workforce was firstly substantially depleted and secondly very weak.

efficiency. Worker A3 (1989) helped me to understand this dynamic by saying that the training helps

"to do the work faster. Definitely. The thing is, before now you did the work like thinning and pruning, but you didn't know why you were doing it or what techniques you were using. Now you know why you are doing it in this particular way." (19)

6.3.2.2 'Life enrichment' and control

Life enrichment is also aimed at control - both consent and coercion. Management tried to improve control in two ways; firstly through providing benefits like improved working and living conditions and, secondly, through influencing the relationships between workers.

By providing better living and working conditions, management hoped that workers response would be of greater support for them and their project. Fox (1985:128), in discussing changes to workers lives, that was encouraged through the 'Quality of Life' movement, says that in a similar way

"(T)he expectation was that, given a keener conciousness of personal involvement as a consequence of this enlarged role, the employee would respond with a stronger commitment"

The consent that management hopes to develop on these farms,

(19) Original: "om die werk vinniger te doen. Definitief. Die ding is, voorheen jy het die werk soos uitdin en boomsny gedoen, maar jy't nie geweet hoekom jy dit doen nie, of op watter manier jy dit doen nie. Nou weet jy hoekom jy dit só moet doen.

through the provision of better conditions, is enhanced by the paternalistic relationship that exists between management and workers. (20)

This has meant that management acts in a benevolent manner and tries to develop this impression of itself amongst the workers. Worker A5 (1989) told me for example that

"I think the boss is happy with us. He says he's going to do this and there are things he's done for us. If we talk to the boss then he does it for us." (21)

In response to this, workers seem to have shown gratitude to management for the provisions.

Worker A1 (1989) said, for example, that "(W)hen everything was upgraded, it meant a lot to us." (22)

But does this provision of improved working and living conditions only act on the level of the benevolent management trying to develop workers' consent? In the context of extreme housing shortages in the towns, for example, workers depend on these

(20) Newby (1977:70) says paternalism is a contradictory relationship where the dominant class wants

"to maintain a degree of hierarchical differentiation from those over whom it rules; on the other hand it wishes to cultivate their identification by defining the relationship as an organic partnership in a cooperative enterprise."

(21) Original: "Ek dink die baas is tevrede met ons. Hy sê hy gaan vir ons die maak en daar is dinge wat hy vir ons gemaak het. As ons met die baas praat dan doen hy dit vir ons."

(22) Original: "(T)oe als ontwikkel het, dit het vir ons baie beteken."

houses and it seems that management knows this and uses its control over these houses as a measure to coerce workers. When discussing the possibility of the workers on his farm joining unions, for example, Manager C (1989) said that

"Here they've got their families, they rely on the houses. I don't like holding the houses as a threat over their heads but you do have all that."

He was quite prepared to evict workers if they joined unions.

It is not only the increased power to evict workers that management gains from the much improved houses. By providing electricity and water for example, (23) it increases the possible punitive measures that management can use to coerce workers into abiding by their rules. Manager B (1989) said, for example, that if workers join a union, "I mean they are going to have to pay rent, electricity and water..."

Whether intended or not, therefore, the control that could emerge for management from 'enriching workers lives' seems, on one level, to be through winning workers consent by giving in to workers' demands for improved living and working conditions. (24) On another level, however, it seemed that workers felt that the possibilities of obtaining similar jobs and housing conditions in the towns were slim (in the light of the level of unemployment

(23) Workers on all the farms did not pay for these things.

(24) These demands had already emerged in the 1970's. See Chapter 2 and 4.

and the housing costs in the towns (Worker A3 (1989)) and this then increased managements' coercive power.

The second way that management hoped to develop control through 'life enrichment' was by influencing the relationships between workers. I would argue that management has tried to encourage a sense of common purpose in production as well as cohesion in the community. At the same time, in apparent contradiction it has encouraged divisions amongst workers. I will first deal with managements' attempts at creating cohesion amongst workers.

In the workplace this occurs through (i) training, (ii) profit sharing and (iii) through workers 'making out'.

(i) Aspects of the training aimed to develop in workers a common purpose to produce the greatest amount of the best quality fruit. The most important aspect of the training through which management tried to achieve this was the 'Winners Programme'. Manager A (1989.b) explained his understanding of the importance of the 'Winners Programme'.

"I think training is improving the chaps skills. That's why I'm not so over worried about the skills. Skills come with time. That's why I put so much more emphasis on the 'Winners Concept'. The 'Winners Concept' is a political concept; not politically forced down from our side, not that. It's an attitude thing, a different sort of training. That is where we tell each other what we do, what's our job, what's our function, why we are human, why do we talk like that. That's the key, it's got to be the key."

This is what happens in 'Winners Programme' sessions, but for what purpose?

I would argue that the 'Winners Programme' operates on three levels. Firstly, by explaining capitalist business principles and the role that each worker fulfills in the overall process it aims to affect worker performance and care at work. Secondly, the 'Winners Programme' encourages a 'productivity deal' by explaining that if the 'farm' makes a profit then the workers are sure to gain from it. Worker B1 (1989) said, for example that, "if the farm makes a profit we must be certain that we'll get something out of that." (25)

As part of this, the programme also aims to discourage losses through 'accidents' or carelessness because there will then be less profit. (26) Worker A4 (1989) said that, in the 'Winners Programme' sessions that he ran with the workers, he told them that "if he (a worker) causes any damage to the farm, then

(25) Original: "as die plaas wins maak dat ons verseker moet wees, ons sal iets daar uit kry."

(26) Schärf (1984:202) in his study of the Stellenbosch winefarms identified a number of 'accidents'

"that involved damage to the farmer's property: driving a tractor into a ditch, vandalising a borehole, letting animals out of enclosures to run onto the road, dismantling a pump, opening up dam-sluice taps to let precious water out, injuring animals."

These 'accidents', Schärf said, were the "easiest, safest, most anonymous way of expressing anger at the farmer who 'owned' them." (1984:202)

there'll be no money to pay him."(27)

The third level at which the 'Winners Programme' training operates is in justifying the hierarchical structure on the farm. It explains the role of each person in the functioning of the business, and the 'importance' of each position for the success of the enterprise. In doing this, management creates the impression that each person's participation in the 'co-operative team' is indispensable and therefore requires loyalty to the common goal. Using the 'Winners Programme' therefore management explains, to the worker, the rewards of being part of the co-operative team while, at the same time, explains the penalties for disloyalty.

(ii) Profit-sharing had only been introduced on Farm D. Fox (1985:118) says of profit-sharing that the

"belief persists... that to give employees an ownership stake in the enterprise or a share in the profits will arouse the desired spirit of involvement and commitment."

It seemed from my interviews with management and workers on Farm D, that workers on the farm did not express a strong commitment to the success of the enterprise. I would argue that the system had, therefore, been introduced with the aim of arousing the desired 'spirit' on Farm D. It seemed that management hoped that profit-sharing would work in two ways.

Firstly, management used the scheme to explain elementary

(27) Original: "as hy skade aan die plaas doen, dan is daar nie geld om vir hom te betaal nie."

principles of capitalist business to the workers. Manager D1 (1989) said, for example, that they were trying to tell workers, with the scheme, that "they are actually part of a business and they must work to get what they get."

Secondly, management used profit-sharing to try to develop an understanding that everybody on the farm gained from the profits created. Manager D1(1989) said that the workers were 'finding it difficult' when management tried to explain that

"No matter who you are, whether you're a garden boy, or general manager, there's a certain amount being put away and it's going to be divided up."

In these two ways management hoped the profit-sharing scheme would develop in workers a commitment to efficient and careful work in a co-operative enterprise. In exchange the impression was created that everybody would gain in increased shared profits.

Although it is difficult to say what workers' reactions to this scheme would be, as it had only recently been instituted, but was it merely because they did not understand the scheme that made workers distrust it? I would argue that it was also a distrust of management more generally that caused workers to "find it difficult" to understand profit-sharing. This was because even if workers obtained large bonuses from the scheme, the way that management related to workers on a day to day basis contradicted the idea of greater equality that profit-sharing tried to create. Power clearly remained vested in management on the farm. Worker D1 (1989) illustrated this imbalance of power and the manner with

which management used it. In response to a question as to why workers were scared to ask management for high wages, he said that it was

"because the men have that dread that he (the worker) would then have to vacate his house. Or he would be chased away, or he gets a horrible answer. That's actually what it's all about." (28)

It seems, therefore, that workers' day to day experiences militated against the idea of a common-purpose in production that profit-sharing tried to create.

(iii) The different managements were aware of the activity of 'making out' and knew that it worked in their favour. Manager D1 (1989) explained how workers 'make out'.

"I don't know if you've ever been into an orchard while they've been picking - it's the way they talk to one another. I don't understand it, like 'Come on, let's go to the bin.' They really push one another to get there. The other day we had one team working through tea time so that they could win (the coke) that day."

There were, nevertheless, different reactions to 'making out' from management. On Farm C, for example, the manager had, in the past, split the workers into two teams to encourage competition in the picking. In 1989, he decided to keep the workers as one team and then pay all the workers the same piece rate bonus for

(28) Original : "Omdat die manne het die vrees dan moet hy sy huis leeg maak. Of hy word weg gejaag, of hy kry nie 'n lekker antwoord nie. Dis eintelik waarom die ding gaan."

each day's picking. But the workers themselves divided into two groups to compete against each other. Manager C's (1989) response was that

"it's more like a game, but they can do it if they want to, it doesn't worry me, as long as it doesn't disrupt the picking."

In effect, rather than disrupting picking, this competitive game probably increased the speed at which the workers picked, and in the process increased their earnings as well as their productivity. The workers possibly also did it to cope with the boredom of taking an apple off a tree and putting it in a shoulder bag. Manager C didn't discourage this form of 'making out' because it worked in his favour, but he also didn't encourage it by, for example, having different bonuses for the two teams.

On Farm D, by contrast, management actively sought ways to encourage workers to 'make out', by introducing the 'coke story' for example.

Manager D1 (1989) said that with the 'coke story'

"there's such a fight to win, I mean, they are in one tenth of a bin of each other as a team. So I think that is quite nice and I'm trying to think of incentives to keep it going."

In this case, then, management developed the possibilities for workers to 'make out'. In the process, management gained from the

increased productivity that may have emerged from the common purpose developed in this way.

It is important to point out here that there is a difference in the 'common purpose' developed through training and profit sharing on the one hand and 'making out' on the other hand. Management tries, through training and profit sharing, to develop a longer term allegiance to the enterprise while team incentives, for example, allow workers to see daily the effect of their common purpose.

This is important because it shows that management does not rely on only one method to develop a common purpose in production. Rather, as on farm D for example, where management uses profit sharing, financial team incentives as well as the 'coke story', a variety of methods are used in conjunction with each other.

Cohesion amongst workers in their community seemed to be actively encouraged only on Farms A and B. This happened in different ways. (i) Workers and their children came together in the various clubs and did things together. The women on Farm A, for example during the less busy period of the year, met during the weeks that they were not on shift and they sewed and baked (amongst other things).

(ii) Cohesion was developed through broader farm parties and social gatherings arranged by either the liaison committee or management. So, for example on Farm A, there were often videos presented in the coloured workers' hall on Saturday nights. Worker A1 (1989) explained that

"Everyone can come. They (African workers) can also come if they want to. See, we invite them. We want to be together with them, so we aren't so separated. It doesn't look so nice." (29)

(iii) Together with these activities, there was an ideological thrust to develop a community spirit, and to resolve conflicts amicably. Worker A4 said that in the past

"people lived past each other.... If I felt like saying a horrible word to you, I would just give it, wouldn't matter where it was. Now, I'll first think twice. The main point is, we must communicate more with each other... It binds us, ... so that we can be more comfortable with each other." (30)

It seems from this that workers welcome and develop this cohesion because it means they have a more comfortable existence. But management also actively encourages worker cohesion because it benefits from it too. On one level a more cohesive community means that management has to spend less time sorting out community problems. Worker A4 (1989) said that in the past "every weekend there was a problem here. The boss was always at loss

(29) Original : "almal kan kom. Dié (African workers) kan ook kom as hulle wil. Sien ons nooi entelik vir hulle uit. Ons wil saam met hulle wees dat ons ook nie so uitmekaar is nie. Dit lyk mos nie mooi nie."

(30) Original : "het mense verby mekaar gelewe.... As ek voel ek wil vir jou 'n lelike word praat, het ek hom sommer gegee, maak nie saak waar dit is nie. Nou ek gaan eers twee keer dink. Die main point is, ons moet meer komunikeer met mekaar.... Dit bind ons, ... sodat ons meer gelukkiger met mekaar kan wees."

about what to do and was always furious." (31)

According to Worker A4 (1989), the liaison committee had taken over dealing with most of the community's problems because, since the upgrading, these problems had not been too serious.

On another level, the cohesion in the workers' community also seemed to develop workers' consent. Worker A1 (1989) explaining the change in the community said that on Farm A,

"When I came here,... each one had their own thing, and did things just as they wished. It wasn't really something right. We now have a nursery-school, a youth, and we have a women's club." (32)

Thus, it seems that workers interpreted the cohesion in the community as being the result of management-inspired developments. Management had allowed and encouraged the ECDA and other agencies onto the farm and it was the projects of these organisations that had helped in the development of a stronger community spirit.

This had a further aspect to it. On a day to day level, since the various clubs and societies had been instituted and there were fewer social problems on the farm, management's relationship with the workers was far more amicable. Workers' changed experience of

(31) Original : "(E)lke naweek was hier maar 'n probleem. Toe is die bestuur maar altyd net uit sy skoene uit en is maar altyd woedend."

(32) Original : "toe ek hier gekom het ... het nou elkeen hulle ding gehad, en dinge gedoen soos hulle moet. Dit was nie eintelik iets reg nie. Ons het nou 'n kleuterskool, 'n jeug en ons het 'n vroue klub."

their relationship with management, emerging out of the changed conditions, had therefore added to the development of consent.

In these different ways, then, management encouraged, and benefitted from, the greater cohesion amongst workers. But the cohesion that was developed amongst workers around management's purpose however, had a contradictory effect. By uniting workers, divisions that might have occurred between workers before were undercut. The potential for workers to unite around issues antagonistic to management therefore was increased. Management was aware of this contradictory effect of its attempts to develop cohesion. It therefore tried to divide workers, or allowed past divisions to continue, when the unity amongst workers might have threatened its power, or profits. I discuss three types of division amongst workers: (i) racial (ii) religious and (iii) fear of management's informers.

(i) Relations between African and coloured workers generally are directly affected by cultural and language differences. These differences, however, do not need to be divisive. Worker A3 (1989) for example, said that the relationship, between African and coloured workers on Farm A,

"is good, but it's just the communication. You know, it's weak, we can't understand each other. But we speak in our way to them and they speak in their way to us. And that's how we get by." (33)

(33) Original: "is goed, maar net die kommunikasie. Jy weet dit is swak. Ons kan nie mekaar verstaan nie. Maar ons praat op ons manier met hulle, en hulle op hulle manier met ons. So kom ons dan oor die weg."

But management used these cultural differences to divide workers. On both Farms A and D the African workers' living area was separated off from the rest of the community. On Farm D this was by a huge fence, and on Farms A and D there was a rule which forbade coloured workers from going into the African workers' living area. On Farm A the liaison committee had to administer this rule and workers were fined R 30 if they were caught there.

Different respondents gave different reasons for the existence of this rule. Manager A and Worker A1, the coloured chairperson of the liaison committee gave me a similar understanding. Worker A1 (1989) said:

"Look there really was another thing here. I mean it was always the coloured was together with the black people. But then another thing came. Mister knows, look the black man has also got his drink. There is sometimes a 'smuggler', that sells wine and that sort of thing. Now the coloured is not allowed to go into the compound." (34)

Worker A5, (1989) an African worker, gave me a different understanding.

"The problem is the brown man goes to the black man and borrows money. Then the black man wants his money on Friday

(34) Original: "Kyk hier was eintelik 'n ander ding hierso gewees, Ek meen dit was altyd die kleuring was saam met die swartmense. Maar hier het 'n ander ding gekom. Meneer weet, kyk die swart man het ook maar sy drink. Daar is party keer smokkel, wat wyn verkoop en daai ding. Nou mag die kleurling nie daar by die kamp in gaan nie."

and brown man promises this. And when Friday comes, then the brown man hasn't got money. Now that's where the fighting comes. Now they fight and the black man always fights with the 'kierie' and the brown man, with the fist. Now the kierie hits holes in the head. That is the problem. Then the man can't come and work." (35)

The workers that I spoke to on Farm A either disagreed with the rule or else just felt it was unnecessary. Whatever the origin of the decision to split the workers in two groups, it seems that it is management that encouraged this division. Manager C (1989), who only employs two African workers himself, helped me to understand why management maintains this division. When he was talking about the possibility of the unionisation of farmworkers, he said that he didn't expect them to succeed on his farm because of the small number of workers. He said, however, that

"on the larger places you could have a problem. Especially when you are getting a lot of labour coming down from the Transkei en masse, where they can organise themselves."

So on Farms A and D, management has separated the African workers from the coloured workers ostensibly for the purposes of restricting drink or debt. In the process, it means that if organisation does develop amongst the African migrant workers, it

(35) Original: "Die probleem is die bruinman gaan na die swartman en leen geld. Dan wil die swart man sy geld Vrydag hê en die bruinman belowe so. En as Vrydag kom dan het die bruinman nie geld nie; nou daar kom die bakleiery. Nou hulle baklei en die swart man baklei altyd met die kierie en die bruinman met die vuig. Nou die kierie slaat gate in die kop. Dis die probleem daai. Dan kan die man nie kom werk nie."

decreases the possibility of that organisation spreading to the coloured, 'permanent' workers. The Western Cape organiser, in the Farm Workers Project of the Food and Allied Workers Union in 1988, indicated that a similar situation occurred on other farms. He said that on one of the farms the African workers had all joined the union and that he had started trying to organise the coloured workers. But then,

"the foreman heard about the thing...And then the personnel manager called a meeting with the coloured workers. And he let them draw up a sort of petition where the workers said that they were happy with the way they were treated and they give the manager permission to trespass me....I found out from the Africans that he hadn't spoken to them." (36)

(ii) The next division was that

"the religious people don't want to be with the non-religious." (37) (Worker C1,1989)

This division was complex because, although it was interpreted as a division between religious and non-religious people, in practice it emerged as antagonism between those that were still suffering the effects of the dop-system and were alcoholics and

(36) Original: "die voorman het toe die ding in die ore gekom....En die personeel bestuurder het toe 'n vergadering geroep met die kleurling werkers. En hy het hulle 'n soorte petisie laat opstel waar die werkers nou sê dat hulle tevrede is hoe hulle behandel word. En hulle gee die bestuurder toestemming om my te trespas...Ek het by die Africans uitgevind het dat hy nooit met hulle gepraat nie."

(37) Original : "die gelowige mense wil nie saam met die ongelowige mense gaan nie."

those who had reformed their habits, usually becoming religious in the process. It was further complicated because the anger amongst workers about the lack of 'development' on these farms became directed at the heavy drinkers rather than at management.

Antagonism between religious and non-religious did not seem to be important on Farms A and B. I understood that, on these farms, while some workers did still drink alcohol, farm rules as well as social pressure from the majority of workers meant the drinking of alcohol rarely happened in excess. Further, management had actively discouraged drinking while at the same time encouraged the formation of clubs and societies and had improved workers living conditions as well. This 'development', on Farms A and B, meant that there was not the basis upon which such a division could develop.

By contrast, on Farms C and D this seemed to be one of the main ways in which workers were divided. Management seemed to be aware of this division and, whether consciously or not, its actions did widen this chasm. In the process, it seemed that management gained from the lateral conflict that emerged between workers. I was alerted to this, most clearly, in my interviews on Farm C. On that farm the wages, the living conditions and the social cohesion amongst workers were relatively bad compared to other farms in the area, and workers knew this. (38) From the interviews on the farm, it seemed that there were a number of possible reasons for why management did not spend more money on upgrading.

(38) Worker C2 had spoken about other farms where the workers had facilities and a community spirit that she longed for.

Firstly, it could have been that the enterprise was struggling and so management did not have the money to spend on upgrading. Secondly, it could have been that Manager C was not prepared to spend money on facilities and higher wages, for example, which he felt would either be broken or would be spent on alcohol. Thirdly, it could have been that 'development' on the farm was not a priority for Manager C. Whatever the actual reason, management used the lack of co-operation amongst workers to explain the reason for the lack of 'development'. Worker C2 (1989) said, for example, that

"(I)f you talk about more money, then he (the manager) talks about 'we must work together'...As I see the situation, he sees the others do nothing with it. He sees the others drink it all up and they fight. ..And so we must also, we who don't anymore, we must live under that." (39)

But Manager C, at the same time, encouraged the lack of co-operation by placing his preferences upon the initiatives that workers took. For example, Manager C wanted Worker C1, the mechanic and foreman on the farm to be the chairperson of the liaison committee if it formed. He wanted Worker C1 because

"he's been here much longer...(But) they don't want him to be the chairman because he has the devil in him as they say. (because he is a drinker)" (Manager C,1989)

(39) Original: "(A)s jy praat van meer geld dan praat hy van jy moet saam werk...Soos ek die saak sien, hy sien die ander maak niks daar mee nie. Hy sien die ander drink dit uit en hulle baklei... En nou moet ons ook, ons wat nou nie, ons moet nou daar onderlei."

Manager C therefore wanted the most loyal person on the farm to be in control of such a committee's affairs. Worker C2's (1989) response to this was that

"as I understand my case the white man wants him (WorkerC1) to develop,... it must be the old farm-hand that is the developer. And it looks to me almost as if he doesn't want to develop." (40)

Thus the liaison committee did not form, and the anger that workers felt about the lack of development on the farm became directed at other workers. In the process, Manager C did not have to increase wages and the threat of united action from the workers in support of these demands was possibly reduced.

Worker C2 said that some workers had left the farm for positions on better farms and said that she and her husband were also thinking of leaving if things did not improve. It may be, therefore, that as more and more people leave the farm, management would be forced to improve conditions. At the same time, as more workers become religious on the farm, a more cohesive community could emerge and thus management would be unable to blame the lack of 'development' on a divided community.

(iii) The final way in which management tried to divide workers was through developing fear and suspicion amongst them. The existence of 'witvoete' (41) has been common on farms in the

(40) Original: "Soos ek my saak belê wil die witman hê hy moet wikkkel,... dit moet die ou plaas-man wees wat ontwikkel. En dit lyk vir my amper of hy wou nie wikkkel nie."

(41) Workers who inform management of other workers' activities.

Western Cape (42). Under the changed circumstances, especially on Farms A and B, where management had stressed the idea that the workers were all part of a co-operative enterprise, it appeared that workers spoke less about their criticisms of management. Worker A4 (1989) said in relation to unions for example that workers, on that farm,

"had spoken about that in the past. But then (after management explained the repercussions for joining a union), they heard that they were not allowed to. So they left that story completely." (43)

Thus it seems that for fear of being informed upon and the fear of possibly losing the improved conditions which they had gained, workers had stopped discussing their criticisms of management with others.

'Life enrichment' is thus a broad measure introduced by management in their attempt to improve efficiency and control of workers. I have tried to show that it is a complex process. Improving workers housing and encouraging better community relations, for example, does not necessarily mean that workers

(42) Scharf (1984:Chapter5) continuously refers to them and, during the research for this and my honours dissertation (Mayson,1986), management, the workers and, importantly, the trade union organisers all referred to their presence on the farms.

(43) Original: "het al vantevore daar oor gesels. Maar dan het hulle gehoor hulle mag nie. Dan het hulle daai storie heeltemaal gelos."

will give management their unqualified support and management knows this. 'Life enrichment', therefore, also has its divisive and coercive aspects to it.

6.3.3 Individualisation

In the previous section I discussed how, through 'life enrichment', management had tried to develop cohesion amongst workers - the feeling that they were all part of a team. At the same time, however, management introduced measures which individualised workers. These two apparently contradictory approaches were merely two different measures which management combined in their overall attempt to influence efficiency and control. Individualising workers was an attempt to appeal to each worker's personal interest, be it personal prestige or increased personal earnings. Out of this, management hoped that the productivity of each worker would increase, while that worker remained part of the co-operative whole. On the farms in the sample three ways in which management tried to individualise workers were identified. These were (i) certification, (ii) pay structures and (iii) 'developing responsibility'.

(i) Certification

I discussed in Chapter 5 how workers on Farms A and B received certificates for each course completed. Management and workers both gave me the impression that workers displayed a positive interest in these certificates. Management had introduced them because with the certificates, according to Workers A2 (1989),

"You can see they are developing, you can see, yes." (44)

Manager A (1989) told me about their certificates while we toured the farm. In essence his earlier comment on upgrading in general was also indicative of his feelings about certification:

"You give a chap a sort of a self-image. The whole thing that was lacking with these people, they had no self-image."

Management introduced the certificates, therefore, in an attempt to bolster each workers personal pride and their prestige.

It could be, however, that management hoped that increased efficiency and greater control would emerge from this improved 'self-image'. Firstly, workers would want to strive for other qualifications and would, therefore, try to be more efficient in their daily work so that they might be chosen for further training. At the same time, greater consent from each worker could be the result, as it was management that enabled them to progress.

(ii) Grading and other Pay Systems

There were different pay systems that encouraged individualisation. Firstly, workers were individualised through the grading system. This system was most developed on Farm B, where workers were paid according to their qualifications such that, according to Manager B (1989)

"because a chap is supervising doesn't mean that he has to

(44) Original: "Jy kan sien hulle ontwikkel, jy kan sien ja."

get paid higher than the next worker. The next worker might have many more qualifications than the supervisor."

This grading was accompanied by a six monthly 'chat' in which management discussed each worker's past performance with them and how they could improve in the future. In response to a question as to whether poor performance meant no increase, Manager B (1989) said "No. The increase is there, but it might not be what it should be."

With this grading system on Farm B, management has tried to develop what Edwards (1979) calls a form of bureaucratic control which

"establishes the impersonal force of "company rules" or "company policy" as the basis for control."
(Edwards,1979:131)

While I would argue that bureaucratic control was management's aim, wage increases, as I have shown, also depended very much on management's discretion and their impression on how each worker worked.

Nevertheless, the control effect that this system had on workers was that they seemed to have felt inhibited about asking for higher wages unless they could prove they had gained skills. Worker B3 said that he would only feel happy about asking for higher wages once he knew all the jobs on the farm.

Worker B1 (1989) expressed similar problems about wage increases. When I asked him whether he had asked about a raise, he said

"I enlightened him about the case. So he said, 'Look at that man, he's worked on the farm a long time already, and look this man can drive a tractor.'" (45)

In a similar way to certification, then, the grading system aims to encourage each worker to strive for further qualifications. The simultaneous six-monthly 'chat' leaves part of the grading assessment in the hands of management and thus makes each worker aware that their individual performance is continually being monitored.

A second way that pay structures encouraged the individualisation of workers was through the individual piece-rate incentives. On Farm A, each worker was given their individual clipcard to indicate the number of bags they had picked. As each worker's earnings then depended on the number of bags they had picked, the aim of the system was to encourage fast picking from each worker. So, although there were supervisors present to keep control and monitor the quality of the picking work, it was the clipcard that set the workplace.

(iii) Developing responsibility

A final way in which management tried to individualise workers was by 'developing responsibility' in workers. This occurred on all the farms but it was one of the more important ways that Manager C tried to improve the efficiency, and also the control,

(45) Original: "ek het hom ingelig oor die saak. Toe't hy gesê, 'kyk daai man, hy het al lank gewerk op die plaas, en kyk dié man kan trekker ry'."

on the farm. Manager C (1989) said that, with the changing methods of work on the farm, although a worker

"may be working under somebody who is better at that particular job ... with something else he will be better than the other guy. So we try to encourage individuality that way; that each chap has his job. I think in that way he will be a little bit proud of his job, because he's the one who is always chosen to do that particular job."

'Developing responsibility' on Farm C assisted management in two ways. Firstly, management used it to cut costs. There were no official supervisors on the farm. Manager C rather used this developing of 'responsibility' to maintain his monitoring of the production process; Manager C (1989) said, for example, that "We try to, due to my side of having to watch them the whole time, just to try to give them more responsibility." This meant, however, that while certain workers performed the role of supervisor they did not get paid for this position.

Secondly, and on another level, through 'developing responsibility', management hoped to develop a sense of 'self-worth' in a similar way to 'certification'. Again management expected that this would play itself out in workers' increased efficiency and commitment.

In contrast to the 'Winners-Programme' training and profit-sharing which tried to encourage workers to work for the 'common good', these measures to individualise workers aimed at aspects of a more individualistic nature in order to encourage each

individual's productivity.

6.3.4 Developing internal labour markets

A further way in which management tried to improve the 'quality' and stability of workers was through the development of internal labour markets. Hill (1981:51) has explained the operation of internal labour markets. He says that

"firms that pursue (the) method of building greater loyalty and commitment in fact create their own internal labour markets, selecting from their own pool of labour rather than hiring on the open market outside. Managers look for a diffuse set of attitudes including loyalty to the company and responsibility when promoting, rather than the possession of some specific skill, since people with the right attitude can then be trained by the company to operate its plant."

Thompson (1983:101), however, says that internal labour markets must also be related to the

"emergence of firm-specific skills that encourage employers to develop wage, employment and other promotion policies that will develop a stable labour force."

Both these aspects of internal labour markets were most clearly developed on Farms A and B. Firstly, I discussed earlier how Manager A (1989) had said how he was not too worried about workers' skills but was more concerned about their attitude and had therefore introduced the 'Winners' Programme'. Secondly,

while the level of skill required of 'general labourers' was not very high, management had nevertheless introduced training as well as education about the production process, and had, thus, developed 'firm-specific' skills. It was because management had spent a lot of time and effort trying to develop loyalty as well as skills that they were encouraging these workers to remain on their farms.

Worker A3 (1989) explained what happened on Farm A.

"Vacant posts become available here and then you apply for them. He always chooses people that he sees as progressing on the farm, for a higher position. Like our instructor here. He was also a general labourer, and he got the instructor's post. So you can progress if you do your work well."(46)

Worker A3's direct experience, therefore, in the form of worker A4's promotion, was that it was quite possible to be promoted if you worked well.

The development of an internal market thus helped management in two ways. Firstly it meant that management was more assured that the workers they selected for the different posts would have the required skills and commitment, because they had already seen how

(46) Original: "Hier raak vakante poste oop en dan kan jy daar voor aansoek doen. Hy kies altyd persone, wat hy sien wat vordering op die plaas, vir 'n hoër posisie. Soos ons instrukteur wat hier is. Hy was ook 'n gewone arbeider gewees, en hy het nou hierdie pos gekry vir instrukteur. So jy kan bevordering kry as jy jou werk goed doen."

they worked.

Secondly, developing internal labour markets assisted management in controlling workers. Workers' experience was that management actually promoted workers out of the ranks of the general labour force. Promotions into higher positions on the farm, therefore, appeared to be a reality to which each worker could aspire. But it was a complex dynamic of control because on the one hand workers were coerced into displaying the required efficiency and attitude because if they didn't they would not get promotion. On the other hand, developing internal labour markets could develop consent. Rubery (47) says that

"the radicals have overstressed the control offered by the bureaucratic division of the labour force, and at the same time underestimated or ignored the benefits for the working class of a sheltered, secure, albeit stratified, labour market."

The development of internal labour markets does give workers the benefit of greater job security because the workers already employed are shielded from the mass of unemployed that exist in the broader external market. The consent that possibly develops, therefore, emerges from this relative job security.

On the farms, it seemed that the increased security was interpreted by workers as being because management was satisfied with their performance. Worker A5 (1989) said, for example, that "the boss said we're going forwards, not backwards. The boss is

(47) Quoted in Thompson (1983:149)

satisfied with us." (48) Workers therefore possibly reciprocated with loyalty in order not to disrupt their relatively secure work environment.

6.3.5 Stabilising migrant workers

I discussed earlier in this chapter how management on Farms A, B and D were increasingly employing African migrant workers. As management spent more money on training, they tried to find ways of ensuring that those same migrant workers returned to the farm. Manager A (1989.b) for example, in response to a question as to whether they were trying to employ the same workers, said

"If they're good, and we can possibly get them then obviously we'd prefer that. Our aim is to build up a stable force. We have so far with the coloureds, and most of our bantus."

There were different ways in which management tried to encourage workers to return. Firstly, they had been lengthening the workers' contracts. On Farm A in the past they had had 12-month, 8-month, 6-month and 4-month contracts. Management was busy phasing out the shorter contracts, making the 8-months the shortest. On Farm B, this process had already been completed so that all the migrant workers' contracts had been extended to twelve months. This meant, according to Manager B (1989) that "they are sort of permanently here on the farm, they come back every year."

(48) Original: "die baas het gesê ons gaan voorentoe maar nie agteruit nie. Die baas is tevrede met ons."

Manager A (1989) explained how he felt these changes on Farm A would increase the stability of the workers.

"Look I think they're going to have much more stability once the eight months thing starts. You see then they won't mind staying four months at home and then come back again. But if the chap's only working with you for three months or four months, just to come pick you fruit, I mean what chance in hell has he got to get a job for the rest of the year."

Secondly, while lengthening the contract, management had at the same time, begun improving the living conditions of migrant workers. Manager A (1989) said that

"because they were coming on short periods there was not, uplifting-wise, being done for them what's been done for the coloureds who are your permanent people.... Now we are going to upgrade the whole living standards and everything."

Thirdly, management had introduced a loyalty bonus. With this system the yearly wage increases for migrant workers were dependent on how many years that worker had been returning to the farm.

These attempts to stabilise migrant workers assisted management in two different ways. Firstly, on Farm A, where Manager A said they would never have enough work to employ all the migrant workers for the whole year, these measures tended to bond the 8-month contract workers to the farm because they were unlikely to get a better job elsewhere at the prevailing level of unemploy-

ment. If this bonding succeeded then management would retain the workers who had been trained while at the same time would only have to pay those workers for the eight months of the year that they worked. Secondly, in a similar way to the development of internal labour markets, these stabilising attempts by management do develop a certain security in migrant workers' jobs.

In the context of high unemployment, and the insecurity of jobs that generally prevails under such circumstances (because of the ease with which management can replace workers), the relative security that emerged on these farms, may have developed consent from these workers. Worker A5 (1989) who recruited the migrant workers, said, for example, that "as I know this place, it's good for me, then I also try to assist other people to come here too."
(49)

For management then, this meant that not only were they assured of cheap labour but those workers also seemed to consent to management's control on this level.

I have tried to show in this section that management on the four farms introduced a wide variety of measures in an attempt to improve the quality and stability of workers. Each measure aimed to influence efficiency and managements control of the labour process in particular ways and each management used the measures in different combinations depending on the particular circumstances on their farms. While managements' broad aim was to

(49) Original: "Soos ek die plek ken, is die plek goed vir my, dan probeer ek laat die ander mense ook hier kan kom."

influence efficiency and control, I have tried to show that, with each of the different measures, they focused on developing workers' consent to do this. But, while developing workers' consent may have been the focus, I have also tried to show that, firstly, the consent that workers might show does not mean unqualified and uncontradictory commitment to management and the enterprise. Secondly, although management may have introduced a particular measure to develop consent, that measure might also have coercive aspects to it. Finally, there were other coercive measures which could be used when consent possibly broke down.

Similar, apparently contradictory, features also emerged with the introduction of the new authority structure, to which I now turn.

6.4 The New Authority Structure

Farmworkers' relationships with their bosses are very complex. Unlike workers in the towns, farmers directly control most aspects of farmworkers' lives. The boss who pays them their wage and controls production is the same boss who provides them with their house. Management is therefore extremely powerful on the farms because not only can they fire the workers but, at the same time, they can evict them from their house.

On the farms that I visited, I found that the nature of authority was changing in two ways. Firstly the manner in which management related to workers was changing. Worker A5 (1989) for example, told me how he felt Manager A had changed.

"The boss was also not so nice at that time. And he used to

shout at the people so much they used to shake. Then they said 'No, this boss isn't right. No, I am not going to work here long, I'm going to leave.' It's not long since we got the training; and so the boss came right and we came right with the boss." (50)

Secondly, management had introduced an intermediate layer through which it maintained its authority - the supervisors, which dealt with work-related issues, and the liaison committees, which dealt with community-related issues. This intermediate layer was most developed on Farms A and B.

6.4.1 Supervisors

Supervisors had been introduced by management in an attempt to have more efficient control over the production process. Jones-Phillipson, (1989), from the NTI, said that, on some of the farms in Elgin, there were

"certain cases, where a manager has been a manager for 15 years and he stands in the orchard and watches the foreman watch the supervisor who watches the workers."

So by training an enlarged layer of supervisors, as had occurred on Farm A and B for example, management tried to intensify their monitoring of workers' work. On Farm A for example during the picking season, the workforce of about 150 workers is divided

(50) Original: "Die baas was ook nie so lekker daai tyd nie. En hy het so hard gepraat met die mense, dan bewe die mense ook so. Dan sê hulle 'Nee, die baas is nie reg nie. Nee ek gaan nie lank hier werk nie, ek gaan loop. Dis nie lank nie toe ons nou die opleiding gekry; toe kom die baas reg, en kom ons met die baas reg."

into 9 teams of about 16 workers each. Not only had the number of supervisors increased but, more importantly these supervisors had been trained and given more responsibility and thus relieved management of much as its monitoring role.

The training of supervisors, however, was aimed at different aspects of their role in ensuring the smooth running of the production process. Firstly the training aimed at improving their knowledge of the production process so that they knew every step of the way in that process. The effect that this had on their ability to supervise was that it improved their ability to make decisions. But, it must also be seen in conjunction with the knowledge and training that **workers** received. Worker A4(1989) the instructor, said

"We don't want the supervisor to know everything. We also want the worker to know what the supervisor knows. So that the supervisor doesn't have to stand and nag the whole day. Because the worker also gets tired of someone nagging him the whole day." (51)

Littler and Salaman (1984:66) say that management, in capitalist enterprises, tries to

"demonstrate the importance of the managerial function - to establish the role of management within the differentiated enterprise, and to show that it is necessary, as an

(51) Original: "Ons wil nie hê die toesighouer moet alles weet nie. Ons wil hê die werker moet ook graag weet wat die toesighouer weet. Sodat die toesighouer nie nodig het om heeldag te staan in karring nie. Omdat die werker ook moeg raak as iemand heeldag op hom karring."

organisational function." (my emphasis)

In a similar way management, on Farms A and B particularly, was also trying to justify the organisational role of supervisors through especially the 'Winners Programme' training. In the process both efficiency and control were affected; by giving supervisors the authority to make technical decisions about the production process and by giving them legitimacy.

This was linked to a second aspect of supervisors training in which they were taught, amongst other things "how to work with people" (52). (Worker A2,1989)

It seems that this training was aimed at what Fox (1985:114) calls 'participative supervision'. With this type of supervision it was hoped that the

"supervisor, suitably trained in Human Relations techniques, might draw him (the worker) into some degree of consultation and participation in the decisions immediately governing his work life."

So it was not only the monitoring of the production process that supervisors focused on. The training was also aimed at having an effect on control, most importantly by developing consent. Management was trying to achieve this, not only by encouraging workers to regard the supervisors' role as legitimate but, at the same time, by trying to influence the manner of that supervision.

(52) Original: "hoe om met mense to werk."

6.4.2 Liaison Committees

Management was trying to develop a similar form of authority with liaison committees. I discussed in Chapter Five that these liaison committees performed three roles - a disciplinary role; the co-ordination of community activities; and they articulated, and approached management, on workers' demands. I would argue however that the liaison committees perform the general role of being a wing of management's authority in the workers' community. Manager A (1984) said about liaison committees that "the whole thing is, they must try and keep law and order outside in their villages and their compound."

The three roles of the liaison committee affect control in different ways. Firstly, the disciplinary role is clearly a coercive power given to the liaison committee by management - for example when the liaison committee fines a coloured worker for being in the African worker's living area. Some workers spoke in favour of this disciplinary function of the committee. Worker B1 (1989) said

"I'll tell you, mister, if there wasn't a committee on the farm things would be disorderly. For example, if someone fights, or the son steals while the mother is away, and there was no committee, gosh, then I don't know." (53)

So it seems that on the level of maintaining 'social' order,

(53) Original: "Ek sal vir meneer sê, as daar nie 'n kommittee op die plaas is nie dan is dit onordelik. Byvoorbeeld as iemand nou baklei, of die seun steel terwyl die ma weg is, en daar was nou nie 'n kommittee nie, sjoe, dan weet ek nie."

workers gave the liaison committee their consent to perform this disciplinary role.

Consent was possibly more effectively promoted through the other two roles; coordinating community activities and articulating workers' demands. I said in Chapter Five that farm workers have not, generally, had the experience of a formal structure through which they could articulate their demands. The liaison committees on Farms A and B, although they were created by management, did perform such a role. Worker A1 (1989) the chairperson of the committee said that the committee dealt with

"all the problems of the houses, and if there's illness, something must be done. I am the Chairperson, then I go to the committee and I go to management and then they'll fix these things up." (54)

So, it seems that the liaison committees, on these farms, may have gained legitimacy in the eyes of the workers. It achieved this through serving workers, by acknowledging some of their needs and, with the help of management, fulfilling some of them. Through this process the liaison committee, and in the end management, gained the consent of workers to their authority in the community.

Notwithstanding the fact that it was mainly in this way that the liaison committee encouraged consent, it was also this role of

(54) Original: "al die probleme van die huise, en as daar kan siektes ook, iets moet gedoen word. Ek is die voorsitter, dan gaan ek na die kommittee en na die bestuur en hulle sal nou die dinge regmaak."

the liaison committee that provided the possibility that it could develop into a structure which served workers' broader interests. When I asked Manager E (1989) about this possibility, he disagreed, saying that the liaison committee had

"got certain rules and regulations... So, I think the rules and regulations will confine them to what they can and cannot do."

But this restriction in itself may cause the committee to become more antagonistic. The Farm Workers Project (FWP) organiser I interviewed, Aploon (1988), said

"You see, what the farmers do now, they hold meetings every week with the farm workers. Now, the complaint goes to management, but it can't go further, because management is the top point. Management just says that things are not done that way." (55)

This view was supported by complaints made by workers to Louw (1987:72) about the effectiveness of liaison committees. It was said that "few of the promises made by management were kept."

This had meant, according to the FWP organiser, that some of the liaison committee chairpersons had, themselves, approached the union to find out about the organisation.

(55) Original: "Sien wat die boere nou doen, hulle hou meetings elke week saam met die plaas werkers. Nou gaan die klag na die bestuur toe, maar dit kan nie verder gaan nie, want die bestuur is die top punt. Die bestuur sê net dinge word nie sò gedoen nie."

6.4.3. Resistance and Control.

The relationship between the general workforce and both the supervisors and the liaison committee was complex. I have tried to show that management uses these structures to develop workers' consent. It is possible, however, that, as Fox (1985:115) says of 'participative supervision', workers might soon realise that

"the new style was... a technique by which management sought to pursue its ends more effectively while at the same time convincing the managed that they were being given a significantly greater voice in their work experience."

It is difficult to say whether the workers on the farms I studied had developed this mistrust of the various authority structures because all the workers I interviewed seemed relatively supportive of the supervisors and the liaison committees. Did this mean, however, that all workers on these farms felt similarly about the 'new style of management'? Further, did it mean that Fox's finding, above, did not apply to these workers?

Many of the workers I interviewed said that there were workers who said that supervisors and committee members were 'witvoete' - informers for management. Worker B1 (1989) explained how he felt this impression developed. He said that

"(I)f you associate a lot with the white man, or if he calls you to one side to talk about the work, how the work must be done, 'check that and make sure that things go smoothly'. When you come back, then the people think that you've been

talking about something else. Then they think you're an informer." (56)

Thus, for Worker B1 (and other workers in various positions of authority that I spoke to), he did not consider himself a 'witvoet' but that it was rather because of his position in the enterprise that meant that workers distrust him.

Manager A (1989) said about the liaison committee on his farm, that

"you know that is a thing that did exist with the start of all these things. The rest of the people thought 'well, these are now the witvoete, the gatkruipers."

The workers on that farm, however, indicated that this problem still occurred. Worker A3, (1989) who was on the liaison committee, said that

"If we discipline him (the worker), then the people are prone to say it. Then it emerges that we can't clear up the case in our committee... And, in that instance, the people say we are informers - we take the things, as they say, up above. They are prone to say it but it is not so." (57)

(56) Original: "As jy baie met die witman nader, of hy roep jou eenkant om te gesels oor die werk, hoe die werk nou gedoen word, 'kyk na dit en laat dit goed loop'. As jy terug kom dan dink mense jy het iets anders gepraat. Nou dink hulle jy is witvoet."

(57) Original: "As ons hom tug, dan is die mense geneig om te sê. Dan kom dit so dat ons nie die saak kan opklaar daar by ons komitee nie ... En in daai opsig sê die mense ons is wivoete - ons neem die dinge, soos hulle sê, na bo. Hulle is geneig om te sê. Maar dit is nie so nie."

These reactions of workers were clearly indications of their resistance to the new authority structures. I would argue, however, that in the process, these management-created structures seemed to serve as a buffer for workers' antagonism and resistance. Management-worker conflicts were, thus, transformed and redistributed into 'intra-employee' conflict. (Thompson,1983:161)

In this way, on Farms A and B, antagonism against management was directed at those workers that consented to be part of the authority structures and, I would argue, possibly dissipated that resistance in the process.

This antagonism towards the 'authorities' was complex and emerged out of the contradictory position of the supervisors and the liaison committee members. Marcus (1986:213) says that, in the post-1975 period, although

"payment is more standardised and systematised, where formalised differentiation of the workplace is practiced, most black workers in responsible organisational positions in the authority structure are classified as 'semi-skilled'. In other words, and like other skilled workers, notwithstanding their often cardinal significance in the organising and running of the work process, they are systematically downgraded in the work hierarchy because of the white, paternalist and class interests of the farming establishment."

In a similar way, for supervisors on Farm A and B, although they might have got training for their role, and have had a relatively

increased level of authority in the production process, their social position was very similar to general workers. Supervisors did generally get a better wage (58), but these wages remained very low. They lived in the same type of house and were subject to the same discipline in the community as general workers were. Their demands were therefore very similar to the general workers' demands. But they were, nevertheless, part of management's authority structure. In this way, then, antagonism to management was transferred into conflict between workers.

Liaison committee members were also in a contradictory position. On the one hand, the committee was elected by the community to serve their interests. Worker A3 (1989) for example, in response to whether he would restand for election to the committee when his present term ended, said

"if the people want me, I will stand for another two years. I actually enjoy it... I mean, it's to help our community. For me it's a privilege to help our community as well."
(59)

On the other hand, I have tried to show that the committee was only able to serve workers' interests within confines set by management. Thus the committees served as an extension of

(58) This was not always the case; Worker B2, a general worker who had been on the farm for eight years received R103 per week while Worker B1, the instructor and supervisor, who had only been on the farm for three years received R96.

(59) Original: "as die mense my wil hê, dan sal ek weer staan vir nog twee jaar. Ek geniet dit nogal. Ek meen, dis om ons gemeenskap te help. Dis vir my 'n voorreg om ons gemeenskap ook to help."

management's control into the community. Liaison committee members therefore were thrust into the contradictory position of being elected to serve the workers, but in the course of fulfilling their tasks, served management.

Management, and its agents (for example, the NTI), realised (whether they planned this misdirected antagonism or not) that workers will resist their co-optive strategies and become antagonistic to these new authority structures. So, in their training courses, supervisors and the instructors were prepared for this reaction from workers. Worker A4 (1989), the instructor, said

"a man can say to me what he wants to say.... I'm not worried. I have been trained that I must be humble. I must be humble, even if I get angry." (60)

Worker B1 (1989) indicated that the supervisors were given a similar training. He said

"What I learnt was this. We are supervising, then you must assume that you are a parent and the workers are children. And the children have got complaints and problems, everything that you have to be able to deal with. And stay friendly with everyone." (61)

This preparation of supervisors, for example, was an attempt to

(60) Original: "'n Man kan aan my sê wat hy wil sê... ek is nie geworried nie. Ek is so opgelei dat ek moet die minste wees. Ek moet die minste wees, al word ek ontstoke."

(61) Original: "wat ek geleer het was dit. As ons nou toesig hou, dan moet jy aanvaar dat jy is 'n ouer. En die werkers is kinders. En die kinders het klae en probleme als wat jy moet kan dra. En bly vriendelik met almal."

enable them to contain that resistance and avoid a situation that occurred at Farm D. On that farm, they had foremen, and no supervisors, and workers' antagonism to one of the foremen got to the extent that that foreman left the farm. Manager D1 (1989) told me how she understood what happened.

"They're scared of one another you know. They gang up terribly. At one stage we had two coloured foremen and that also doesn't work on our farm very well. They're jealous of one another and then they start stories. It depends who they don't like that week, and she's having an affair with the foreman. And next week it's all forgotten about because they don't like someone else. And then she's having an affair. So in the end Charles left us. They don't know how to actually understand that they themselves could one day get that position as a foreman. But I think they basically don't seem to think it's fair that why is he getting a salary, he gets a better house, he gets a farm vehicle and they're not."

6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented an understanding of the wide variety of changes that have taken place on the four farms that I studied. I have tried to show that these changes cannot be understood only at face value or on the level of the massive benefits that these changes have brought for the workers on these farms. Workers have clearly benefitted from improved living conditions, for example. Rather, I have argued, the meaning of these changes has to be sought historically in the attempt by

management to get out of the profitability crisis that emerged in the 1970's and 1980's.

I have said that the measures introduced also have to be understood within the social context of the contradictory relationship between capitalists and workers which is dominated by the capitalist's search for profit. On the basis of this contradiction emerges the fact that measures introduced by management may have the potential of becoming antagonistic to their interest. So, for example, management's attempts at creating a representative liaison committee structure in the community, with the aim of developing workers' consent, has the potential of being turned to working rather to serve workers' underlying interests.

Secondly, it means that because of this potential, the situation on the farms (or in any capitalist enterprise for that matter) is dynamic; management has to continually devise new measures which combine with and emerge out of those that no longer serve managements' interests. For example, I discussed in the 'New Authority Structure' section earlier that management had developed an enlarged and trained supervisory grouping with skills which were aimed at developing workers' consent. The chronological order of events is difficult to determine but I would argue that after the supervisors were initially trained, the workers resisted these newly trained agents in various ways. In response, management introduced the 'winners programme', to help justify the supervisors role, while at the same time included in the supervisors training aspects which management

hoped would help them cope with and contain this resistance.

To conclude, therefore, the strategy that management embarked upon to get out of their profitability crisis was to cut production costs through employing cheaper workers and trying to improve the productivity of all the workers employed. The measures that the different managements introduced, in their attempt to carry out that strategy, were varied and full of apparent contradictions.

Finally, notwithstanding the effect of broader social conditions, nor the coercive measures operating simultaneously, developing workers' consent has become the focus of the various measures that management introduced in their attempt to improve productivity.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

This study has been primarily concerned with investigating and explaining the various changes that have taken place on the four farms in Elgin. The focus has been on the forms of control to encourage higher productivity. I said in the introduction to the study that control is complex and throughout the study I have tried to show this complexity when discussing control in its various forms. In this conclusion, it is important to try to further unravel this complexity of control. Having discussed control in this way, I then assess the impact of the Rural Foundation, look at four broader trends that emerge out of the changes introduced on the farms, then finally suggest possible implications of these trends.

7.1. The Complexity of Control

There are two interlinked aspects to the complexity of control which I wish to consider. (i) The interrelationship between coercion and consent. (ii) The changing processes of control.

7.1.1. Coercion and Consent

What has become clear in this study is that overall control is an intergration of measures aimed at developing consent and coercive measures which exist at the same time to enforce management's will. While aspects of both these types of measures are always present, the balance between them is always dynamic. Management's decision as to which measures to employ most actively depends on a variety of factors. These include,

according to Fox (1985:14),

"technology and the type of productive system being used, the nature of the labour force, employee aspirations and attitudes, the state of the labour market and various others".

Other factors not referred to by Fox include the level of organisation amongst workers and the degree and forms of resistance from them. Further, the broader political concerns of the state and the nature of assistance provided for the farmers also affect the balance of the control methods used. These factors are always changing and so the balance between consent and coercion is itself always shifting. Despite this ever-shifting balance, it is, nevertheless, possible to identify phases related to particular historical conditions during which certain emphases of control prevail.

7.1.2. The Changing Process of Control

We have seen in this study that during the 1980's, improved productivity of workers had become increasingly important for management on the four farms in Elgin. It was not only increased quantity that these managers were wanting but also an improved quality of the product produced. To this aim, the farmers began investing in workers through training them as well as improving their living conditions. These improved conditions were aimed at encouraging more sober habits and stability on the farms. As farmers invested more in skills and attitude training, for

example, they wanted to retain those workers they had trained. In the process, control was transformed.

Under labour tenancy (1), for example, control was characterised by the farmer's personal power to provide and take away tenants' access to land. Under the present circumstances on the farms in the case study, this has changed. I discussed in Chapter Six how on Farms A and B, workers had sessions with the 'winners programme'. In those sessions, workers were given a picture in terms of which the 'farm' (rather than the farmer) makes a profit and that profit depends on workers care and speed in the work. It was explained that if the 'farm' made a profit, the workers would gain from this in improved benefits. With this explanation, the workers were thus given to understand that the farmers' personal power to determine their conditions had been replaced by the 'market' and the success of the farm in the 'market' depended on workers' productivity. This understanding created the impression that it was in the mutual interests of management and workers to maximise profits. Management on Farm D used the profit-sharing system in an attempt to create a similar understanding amongst workers. On Farm C, there seemed to be no real attempt to develop the understanding of a co-operative enterprise. Nevertheless a vision of the determinant role of workers' productivity in the success of the farm in the 'market' was clearly promoted. Profits and, for workers, wages depended on production and therefore workers needed to improve their productivity to increase their, predominantly incentive, wages.]

(1) Discussed in chapter two.

Consent in increasing productivity may therefore be developed from this 'productivity deal' because workers want improved conditions or a share in the profits or improved wages and that depends, according to the new understanding, on their productivity. On another level, and emerging out of this 'productivity deal', workers consent to management's authority may also increase because of the impression created that it is now not the manager who determines workers' conditions. It is determined by the success of the enterprise and management has a necessary role in ensuring that success.

While management tries to develop this impression of the decisive role of the 'market', workers do also see that management makes the decisions about the workers' benefits, even if it is with suggestions from workers through the liaison committee. I would argue, therefore, that consent to management's authority may still be developed through the gratitude of workers to the benevolent manager.

Coercive measures continue under this transformed form of control. Workers are fined, dismissed and evicted but the reasons given for this coercion have also changed in line with the emphasis on productivity. Management spends money on workers' training, for example. If workers then do not perform sufficiently well or are not prepared to 'take responsibility' (Manager C, 1989), the impression is given that not enough profits will be made. This will mean that management will be

forced, by the 'market', to dismiss workers. In a similar way to consent, therefore, management may be portrayed as removed from its coercive role, and workers' lack of productivity and the working of the market laws are thus blamed.

Again, however, while this is the understanding that management tries to portray, workers also experience coercion as management's direct intervention, for example, when a suspected union organiser was dismissed on Farm B. This type of dismissal may be explained in terms of management's role of maintaining order so that production for 'shared profits' is not disrupted, but it is management that is doing, and is seen to be doing, the dismissing. While management may feel that this is a necessary action in its attempt to maintain overall control, this type of coercion does work against management's attempts to develop workers' consent.

We have seen in this study that consent and coercion are integrated and operate simultaneously, in different ways, in the attempt to achieve management's aims. On the four farms, the emphasis of control has clearly shifted towards consent and this is evident in that the relationship between management and workers appears to be far more amicable. Any attempt to understand control and the real relationships between farmers and workers, however, cannot remain at the level of appearances - for example, that the relationship between management and workers seems relatively amicable. The underlying relationships, the aim

of control and its actual operation need to be clarified in order to understand how the apparently contradictory measures of consent and coercion can coexist, being used simultaneously for the same goal, which is essentially power and increased profits.

Underlying all of this is the reality that, under capitalism, the means of production are owned by, and are under the control of, the capitalist, in this case the farmer and that profits are obtained through the exploitation of workers. This means that the relationship between farmers (or management) and workers is always an unequal power relationship and means further that while control methods might shift towards an emphasis on consent, there will always be coercion.

This discussion has tried to clarify the operation of control on the farms. Having raised these aspects of control, it is important now to assess the impact of the Rural Foundation on the changes that have occurred on the farms.

7.2 The Impact of the Rural Foundation.

In its overall understanding the Rural Foundation says that

" Rural community development is the process by which the..... domains - working life, social life and management life - are integrated in order to have a positive influence on the quality of life and living standards of people on farms and in so doing to inculcate in them self-care and self-responsibility." (Rural Foundation annual report,

1988/89:7)

When the managers that I spoke to talked about the Rural Foundation and its activities, it was generally only the 'social life' aspects that they referred to. This was because, in Elgin, the Rural Foundation emerged in a context in which: firstly, many of the farmers in the area had introduced aspects of 'social life' development before the Rural Foundation came to the area and they wanted an organisation to co-ordinate these activities; secondly, in that area there were many farmers' service organisations operating and so the Rural Foundation tended to involve itself mainly in those activities which were not provided by others - what I have called community development.

It is also for these reasons that it is difficult to isolate the impact the Rural Foundation itself has had in this area and on the farms I researched. In other areas, like the Karoo, where it is only really the Rural Foundation that works amongst farmworkers, it would be easier to assess the overall effect of the Rural Foundation.

Three further points, of a methodological nature, need to be raised in terms of the difficulty of assessing the impact of the Rural Foundation. Firstly, the study is based on the perceptions of actors in the field. It is therefore difficult to assess the impact of the Rural Foundation empirically. Secondly, it is not possible to compare the Rural Foundation's impact on its members

farms against the conditions and perceptions of non-members as only Rural Foundation members were interviewed. Thirdly, the fact that only Rural Foundation members were interviewed means also that the indirect influence of the Rural Foundation cannot be measured. Calvert (1989) indicated that a number of the managements on the larger farms in Elgin had introduced their own development projects. As these farms were not the focus, it is impossible to assess what influence the Rural Foundation has had on those developments. Judging from Manager A's assessment, however, the Rural Foundation does have an important indirect impact. When discussing the influence of the Rural Foundation, Manager A (1989) said

"I think it is very important to have a thing like the Rural Foundation going, because at least you've got a body earmarked for the job. It does get your other buggers to pull up socks and get aware of it. You darem find Oom Piet on the other side slowly but surely getting interested."

In Elgin, there were, nevertheless, a number of changes that can be directly attributed to the activities of the Rural Foundation.

7.2.1. Relations between farmers and workers.

One of the most important ways in which the Rural Foundation affected the relationships between farmers and workers was through the development of liaison committees. Regardless of their success or not, and of their role on the farms, on all of

the farms in the sample, management had tried to establish some sort of elected structure amongst workers. This had been in direct response to the Rural Foundation's encouragement of liaison committees and was indicative of the importance with which management perceived the need to formally structure the relationship between them and the workers as well as to have a body to co-ordinate social activities on the farm.

As with the other aspects of change on the farms, however, the success (in the Rural Foundation's terms) of the liaison committees depended to a great extent on the agreement and encouragement of management. So, on farms A and B, where management put a lot of emphasis on community development, there was a fairly well-structured relationship between management and the workers with the elected committees playing a significant role in terms of the co-ordination of activities on the farm and even involving itself in some disputes. On farms C and D, although there had been and were continued attempts to develop committees, during the time the research took place, the relationship between management and workers depended on a 'boss-boy' type of arrangement with one or some of the older workers on the farm.

7.2.2. Community Development - Improving living conditions and the community spirit.

Many of the developments on the farms in the sample had begun before the Rural Foundation started operating in the area.

Improvements to housing had occurred, creches had been established on some of the farms, and sports clubs had been functioning in some cases for many years before 1983. It was not, therefore, the Rural Foundation's impact and influence that gave the initial impulse. Its impact was rather that it developed a broader ideological foundation to the initiatives, linking it all to improved productivity.

1) **Living conditions:** The Rural Foundation does not provide funds for the improvement of workers' houses and community facilities. Improvements to workers' living conditions depend on the farmer's will and means to provide such improvements. The Rural Foundation does, however, encourage farmers to be aware of and improve workers' conditions - Manager C (1989) said, for example, that the Rural Foundation made the farmers aware of the "lot of the farmworkers." To assess the Rural Foundation's impact in this regard therefore can only really be done in terms of the influence it has had on the managements' thinking.

Regardless of how much management had spent and continued to spend on improvements, all of the managers spoke of the need for good housing and facilities for workers. This view can be seen as significantly influenced by the Rural Foundation. When I asked whether the Rural Foundation had influenced his thinking on incentives, Manager C (1989) said, for example, that

"I think that the Rural Foundation has actually made us more conscious of the quality of life, the actual living.....You find that you've got to now get more productivity ,

they (the Rural Foundation) say the quality of life has to increase and that means you've got to have more capital to put into your housing. I wouldn't say it is necessarily due to the Rural Foundation, they could have made us more conscious of it."

The Rural Foundation encourages improved conditions for workers by asserting that improved housing encourages higher workers' productivity, and I discuss this shortly. It also encouraged improvements to housing from two other angles. Firstly, the Rural Foundation put forward the understanding that it was the responsibility of management to provide decent housing. Manager D1 (1989) when discussing how her ideas had changed as a result of the Rural Foundation's influence said, for example, that

"Originally, you always thought you were doing a wonderful thing by just giving them (the workers) a roof over their heads, which you possibly were. In the cities there are still some people who have the most horrific, and yet they are council homes.....But they (the workers) are actually part of your family, they are not only with you for five days of the week, they're with you for seven days of the week every single hour. So, you actually do look after them."

This aspect, management's perceived 'responsibility', was more clearly explained by Calvert (1989), a co-opted member of the E.C.D.A. executive committee, when speaking about the policy of the farm where he worked:

"We believe anyway that there are certain things.....that

are the responsibility of management, irrespective of whether they (the workers) will be better workers, irrespective of whether there will be higher productivity,.....because it's a company village."

Secondly, improved housing was linked to preparing for unions. The understanding was that if farmers improved workers' housing before unions started operating on their farms, there would be fewer grievances that unions could use to obtain members. When I spoke about unions to Manager D1 (1989), for example, she said that they had not had any sign of union activity on the farm and that

"KROMCO's (the packing co-operative) helped us, and so did the ECDA (the local Rural Foundation committee), by getting a contract together, by upgrading our housing." (My emphasis)

2) **Community Spirit:** As I have said, the main reason that farmers gave for joining the Rural Foundation was to encourage the development of the 'social life' aspects on the farm. A variety of activities, for example in the sports, women's or the youth's coffee clubs were introduced by the Rural Foundation community developers with the broad purpose of encouraging a better 'community spirit'. More specifically, these activities and projects were aimed at structuring workers' leisure time as well as involving workers in doing things together. Workers then communicate, are involved with activities other than drinking and

other more." (2)

Again, by contrast, on Farm C, Worker C2 said simply that,

" They (the workers) just don't want to work together. (3)

As I said, these various aspects of 'community development' are all linked, in Rural Foundation understanding, to improved productivity. This understanding was expressed by the community developers. Developer 3, for example, said that

"I think when a worker's happy, outside the work situation, he will be in his work situation also. If I, for instance, have a house with three bedrooms, whatever, and it's suitable for me, I will sort of give it back to the farmer in terms of the work that I do in future."

This understanding also emerged amongst the farmers, and importantly, the workers. Farmers spoke of how investment of money in workers' 'social life' improved productivity; for example, Manager D1 (1989) said " I still believe a happy worker, happy at home, will be far better at work", while manager C (1989) said that improved housing tended to increase productivity because " the quality of your labourers improves."

Workers, on the other hand, spoke of how their quality of life

2) Original: "In die verlede het mense verby mekaar gelewe.... As ek voel ek wil vir jou 'n lelike woord praat, het ek hom sommer gegee, maak nie saak waar dit is nie. Nou ek gaan eers twee keer dink. So ons verstaan mekaar meer."

3) Original: " Hulle wil nou net nie saamwerk nie!"

feel more part of a community.

The impact of the Rural Foundation on this score therefore can be measured by the perceptions of the declining level of drunkenness and the degree of cohesiveness in the workers' community. On both Farms A and B, drunkenness was not seen to be a major problem by both workers and management and the relations amongst workers' were perceived to be good. Manager A (1989) said, with regard to drunkenness, that on that farm, for example,

"The chap used to take his money and go and buy his dop and go and sleep under a tree, and wake up there on a Sunday afternoon.... They still drink over the weekend, but they're using it better now."

By contrast, on Farm D where the Rural Foundation influence had been less marked, Manager D (1989) said that

"They all drink.It doesn't bother me because there're people who drink and people who don't drink. I want to teach them that they don't have to take the bottle and just down it and then smash it onto the ground to get totally motherless."

As far as the relationships amongst workers are concerned, Worker A4 described the changes on Farm A:

" In the past, the people lived past each other.....If I felt I wanted to say something bad to you, I would just say it. Now I would first think twice. So, we understand each

was dependent on their productivity. Worker A1 said, for example, that

"With your house, and your wages as well, I mean it is like that. It is dependent on your work. If you are careful about your work, and you do your work right, then they see!"(4)

It was difficult, however, to assess the impact of the Rural Foundation itself, as regards this broader perspective and its presence amongst workers in particular. This was because the NTI, through its 'Winners Game' in particular, also encouraged this perspective and on the farms in the sample, the workers had had sessions with the Winners Game rather than with the 6M simulation game that the Rural Foundation used. Nevertheless, I would argue that this view was successfully passed on to liaison committees in their training programmes with the Rural Foundation developers. These committees would then be the channel through which this understanding filtered through to the workers in general.

There is also a further indirect way in which the Rural Foundation influences the development of this understanding in workers. Once management has this understanding about 'community development', demands from workers for improved conditions become related to productivity, as I discussed with control earlier.

4) Original: "Met jou huis, en die loon ook, ek meen dit is so. Dit is na jou werk. As jy presies op jou werk is, en jy jou werk reg doen, dan sien hulle !"

7.2.3. A Farmers Forum.

The fourth aim of the ECDA, listed in its constitution, is

"To keep members of the Association informed in respect of matters related to community development."

This was an important aspect of the Rural Foundation's impact in that it established a 'forum' in which the farmers could discuss community development. This was achieved in the ECDA executive meetings, in the Ward meetings, in training sessions that developers conduct with the farmers as well as in the annual general meetings (AGM).

This 'forum' allowed management to discuss the developments occurring on their farms in particular as well as the more general community development issues. It was in these meetings where the ideas of community development were refined by management and the local community developers. For example, the new process of training workers, already living on the farm, to become the 'farm's' paid community developer originated from an idea that Manager A had had, but which was refined and adopted at the 1988 AGM. The 'forum' therefore served not only as a place where the ideas could be refined but it was also the channel through which the ideas could be disseminated.

In conclusion, it is important to emphasise that the Rural Foundation, and the ECDA in this case, was a farmers' service organisation. The activities and structural developments

amongst farmworkers therefore tended to be only those which were management sanctioned. All membership meant was that the facilities and expertise of the Rural Foundation were there to be used if management so wished and it indicated that management had the intention of using them. Mere membership of the Rural Foundation did not necessarily mean that conditions for workers were good and did not mean that the Rural Foundation could enforce certain minimum standards.

The developers are aware of this. For example, in the annual report for the year ending March 1989, Developer 2 said,

"Management's involvement is vital and without management support a liaison committee cannot function effectively."

The developers then acted accordingly and only did things that they knew management would agree to. When I asked if there were ever any tensions between what they wanted to do and management's wishes, Developer 3 said, for example, that

"Before we start a workshop or something, we first contact the farmer and ask if it is possible if we can send some people to this and this....so I think this tension is totally minus."

Its impact, therefore, as we have seen throughout this study, is highly dependent on management's interest and participation in community development.

The impact of the Rural Foundation however has also to be seen within the broader context of the changes that occurred in Elgin. Four trends clearly emerge through the study.

7.3. The Four Trends in Elgin

7.3.1. The first trend that can be identified is the employment of an increasing number of women and migrant workers. The period for which they are employed during the year has also been lengthened. This has occurred, most importantly, as an attempt by management to cut costs as well as an attempt to increase productivity through improving these workers' skills and their motivation. This trend was discussed in Chapter Two as occurring on a national level in the late 1960's to the mid-1970's. In the Western Cape, the increased employment of African migrant workers was delayed because the 'Coloured Labour Preference' policy kept many migrant workers out (5). Since this policy, as well as the other influx control regulations were abolished in the mid-1980's, there has been an increasing number of African migrant workers, men and women, employed on the farms. In the past, women living permanently on the farms, were generally only employed during the picking season (as well as other times if the manager so wished). Now they are increasingly employed throughout the year as 'casuals'.

7.3.2. A second trend is that workers' living conditions and

(5) Other factors, for example the distances from the bantustans, probably also had an effect on the number of migrant workers in the Western Cape in the 1960 - 1970 phase.

standards have improved. In the past, workers were given a basic house to live in, the conditions of which did not seem to be of concern to farmers. This has changed on some farms to a situation where workers' housing is in good condition and includes facilities such as water supply, electricity supply, as well as toilets and bathrooms. Besides workers' individual houses, community facilities have also improved, including community halls, creches, pre-schools and improved sport fields.

7.3.3. The third trend, and as part of the changes to workers' conditions, is that there has been an increased emphasis by management on trying to improve workers' productivity. In the 1960's, on certain farms in Elgin, workers had been shown films instructing them on how to pick fruit. Management's emphasis was on technological innovations such as increasing the quality and quantity of fruit on the trees, as well as trellising the tree to allow for easier picking. While these changes affected workers' productivity, the increased efficiency of labour was not the focus. During the 1980's, there was an increasing profitability crisis brought on by the higher costs as well as sanctions. Such structural conditions, combined with the formation and influence of service organisations, most importantly, the Rural Foundation, has meant that each worker's productivity has become central to management concerns. The focus has therefore shifted to improving workers' efficiency and motivation and a great emphasis on skills and attitude training.

7.3.4. Emerging from this, as I discussed earlier, the fourth trend on these farms is the shift away from the emphasis on coercive methods of control. Rather, management attempts to encourage workers' **consent** to their authority and their aims of general profitability. This shift in emphasis has included methods of making provision for greater job stability, improved standards of living as well as the activities of the Rural Foundation influencing workers' social activities. It has also included a change in the manner in which management relates to workers. In the past the nature of managements' relationship with workers included beatings and workers were ordered to complete tasks with little consultation regarding the work. In the present, management encourages workers' participation in discussions regarding work, and urges workers to discuss their broader needs and problems with either the liaison committee or management. Thus while the possibility of fines or eviction remains and are used as coercive reminders of where power lies, measures aimed at developing workers' consent and commitment to the enterprise have become much more important.

7.4. The Representivity of these Trends

The trends were identified on the four farms which I researched. How representative are they, however, of possible trends in agriculture on a local Elgin level and a national level? As I indicated in Chapter One, I chose these farms on the basis that they presented a spread of the type of conditions and changes

that could be expected to occur on EDCA members' farms in Elgin. We have seen that on some farms, for example Farm C, workers' conditions have not changed a great deal. Nevertheless, improved labour productivity and the type of control measures which have been introduced in line with this aim, were central to management's concern. In Elgin, a third of the managers were members of the ECDA, while, as I have indicated, according to Calvert (1989), the managers on many of the large farms that were not Rural Foundation members had introduced their own training and development programmes. Finally, Elgin is one of the most profitable farming areas in the country and so many of the farmers have the capital to invest in workers. I would therefore argue that the trends I have identified could be expected to be prevalent on a high percentage of farms in Elgin and that they are likely to continue if high profitability continues.

On a national level, I would argue that the existence of such trends in capitalist agriculture is affected by the unevenness in agriculture and depends on a number of interlinked factors. These are (i) Whether the production process is labour intensive or not. (ii) The proximity of the farms to the bantustans or other sources of labour. (iii) The quality of the product required. (iv) The effect that the workers' labour has on that quality. (v) The degree of international competition in the subsector. (vi) The overall profitability of the farms concerned.

With fruit farming in Elgin, the production process is highly labour-intensive requiring large increases in unskilled labour

during certain times of the year. A higher quality of product is required and workers handling of that product has a great effect on its quality. Management, therefore, tries to encourage this large number of unskilled and low waged workers, during the peak period, to work with care to ensure the highest quality of the product. For this reason management tries to encourage the situation where the same workers, each year, form the increase in casual labour required.

By contrast, on highly mechanised grain farms, for example, the permanent workers are generally quite skilled, and few additional workers are needed during the year (Cooper,1988:64). The first trend, that of increased employment of women and migrant workers, would not apply. The second trend, of improved conditions for the small number of workers, would be important as an attempt to retain the trained workers. The third trend, of an increasing emphasis on workers' productivity, would be less important as the productivity of the entire production process is far more dependent on the efficiency of the machines. The fourth trend, the shift to workers' consent, I would argue is important. Management has spent money on the training of these workers and therefore would attempt to create conditions which would discourage workers from leaving the farms and encourage commitment to the farm.

Cooper (1988:65) says that most expansion of horticultural production in South Africa has taken place in areas close to a bantustan or main urban centre. This, he says, is due to the

close proximity of a cheap, casual labour force. The workers are trucked in from these areas on a daily or weekly basis. In such cases, little money is spent on housing for the workers and, if the quality of the product does not depend on workers' care about their work, then management on these farms would not try to encourage those workers' quality of work and their commitment to the enterprise.

It appears, from this discussion, that the likelihood of these four trends occurring simultaneously in other subsectors of agriculture is slim. In those subsectors with similar characteristics, for example, other fruit sectors such as grapes, citrus and bananas, and certain vegetable crops such as tomatoes (Cooper, 1988: Chapter Three) it is likely that these trends would prevail. In other subsectors, changes will develop due to the decreasing government subsidies as well as the increasing debt problem of farmers. It remains to be seen therefore, whether these trends come to form part of farmers' attempts to deal with their profitability crisis, or whether other measures, such as increasing mechanisation, are introduced. In the whole agricultural sector, changes in the international situation as regards possible new markets for the sectors' products as well as new competition will also possibly have an effect on the prevalence of these trends in the future.

It must be emphasised that the changes which have been introduced involve expenses - for training courses, Rural Foundation

membership fees, the building of houses, and so forth. Thus while the state has subsidised aspects of farmers' costs, most importantly, loans from banks, these are increasingly cut back or only made available to the more successful farmer (Cooper, 1988:21). In any of the subsectors of agriculture, therefore, it is more likely to be on the more lucrative farms that these four trends prevail as it is these farmers who are able to pay for the training, wages, incentives and community development. It may be that those farmers who do not have the funds for such changes will increasingly face bankruptcy.

7.5. The possible implications of these changes

An examination of the full implications of the changes introduced on the farms is outside the scope of this study and could only take place over a considerable period. In conclusion, however, I would like to raise various points to serve as a basis for further research.

The possible implications of these changes are that management is thrust into a contradictory position emerging from its present profitability problems. On the one hand, the concerns to address the profitability crisis on the farms has forced management to improve workers' skills and conditions and to encourage their motivation and commitment to 'the farm'. These measures introduced by management to encourage workers' consent have been introduced relatively recently. Workers' conditions of existence on Farms A and B, in particular, have been changing rapidly and

positively over a number of years and I would argue that it is for this reason that workers seem to have a strong commitment to the farms.

On the other hand, while it is impossible to be certain of the direction of struggles between management and workers, as well as the possible control measures which management may introduce into these struggles in the future, the apparently amicable relationship which these changes promote is faced with underlying challenges. Firstly, Fox (1985:79) asserts, when discussing the welfare strategy of management in the early 1900's; that this strategy

"offered little lasting satisfaction.... For employees, the gradual rise in living standards as the twentieth century progressed, along with a slow improvement in the standard of treatment offered by an increasing number of employers, serve to reduce the relative superiority of pioneer welfare companies. Moreover, welfare itself in the cultivated paternal sense has become less and less acceptable to its recipients. The status implications of the father-child relationship with the employees in tutelage to what the employers thought good for them, has begun to jar. Men started to wonder why they should not have the money value of welfare in their pay packets to spend how they liked. "

In a similar way on the farms I researched, it is probable that management will also be faced with the rising expectations of workers in that such improved conditions have become more

generalised in Elgin - the membership of the ECDA, for example, increased by five each year in the three years prior to 1989. Also, as the novelty of living in the much improved houses wears off, for example, it may be that it becomes overshadowed by the fact that workers still have no rights to that house and can easily be evicted if they fall out of management's favour.

Secondly, with these improvements the workers' bargaining position has increased. Farmers have invested in workers through training them. The farmers, therefore, do not want to lose that investment, and it is possible for workers to use this position in their favour when presenting demands.

Thirdly, the changes that have occurred are interpreted by workers as being partly due to the benevolence of management but also partly due to the existence of the liaison committees and their articulation of the demands of workers to management. Workers have, therefore, had an experience of a committee which channels their demands to management. But while the liaison committees do negotiate certain demands of the workers, these are limited as the committee is essentially a management-created structure and thus does not have the ability, in its present form, to enforce workers' demands if management refuses.

There have been examples in the past, however, of liaison committees and other management initiatives being appropriated and transformed into committees which serve workers' interests

more broadly. An example of this is the formation of the Western Province General Workers Union. In 1973, the Black Labour Relations Regulations Amendment Act was introduced and it allowed for the establishment of elected 'works' and 'liaison' committees. Generally, in the emerging trade union movement of the time, this was seen as an attempt by the state and management to forestall the development of trade unions and so they were rejected (MacShane, Plaut and Ward, 1984:55). The Western Province Workers Advice Bureau (out of which the General Workers Union emerged), however, encouraged those workers who sought help at the Bureau to elect factory committees and register them under this Act. Although the other emerging unions criticised this strategy of the Bureau, the Bureau felt it was important because the committees had a measure of democracy and were legal which allowed workers to negotiate with their employers.. These committees then served as the basis out of which the union was formed (6).

It may be, therefore, that a similar process could occur on the farms. In the late 1970's, the factory committees were the first of their kind in that period. They therefore did not have any organised worker support from outside. In the present circumstances, there are two major trade union federations, COSATU and NACTU, which have placed greater emphasis on the organisation of farmworkers. The federations would, therefore, be able to give support to organised initiatives which developed on

(6) For a more indepth discussion of this, see Maree (1986: Chapter Eleven.)

the farms. These factors point to the increased possibilities for independent worker organisation to develop. It may prove to be the case that the very changes management has introduced have the unintended consequences of promoting those possibilities.

The contradictory position in which management is placed as a result of its profitability problems, therefore, develops a central dilemma for management. If it increases its spending on improved training, conditions and wages, it faces the possibility of rising expectations amongst workers and a structurally strengthened workforce with increased bargaining power. If management fails to introduce these changes, it faces the possibility of having to compete against more efficient and more profitable farms with unskilled and less motivated workers and, thus, possibly not overcome its present profitability crisis.

With improvements to the technology available for fruit production, however, it may be that management could decide that the training and improvement to workers' conditions was too expensive and too risky. The improved technology provides further possibilities for management to solve their dilemma. Management might decide, therefore, to mechanise further and retrench workers, thereby reducing the wage bill and possibly maintaining a relatively weak workforce.

In conclusion what this study has shown is that in capitalist enterprises, which are based on the private appropriation of

profit through the exploitation of workers, management has to search continuously for ways of improving the profitability of these enterprises. This includes measures to develop control over workers and improve their productivity. Strategies developed by management, as regards labour, are continuously changing and cannot be introduced without complications because of the fundamental clash of interests that are involved. This we have seen with the changing process of control on the farms and the dilemma faced by management as regards the introduction of the changes. It is thus, with this insight, that the activities of the Rural Foundation and the other service agencies of capital, and the initiative taken by management in introducing the three fields of change - training, incentives and pay structures, and community development - must be understood.

APPENDIX ONE:

Interview Questions

A. Questions for workers

1. What job do you do ?
 - a. Were you trained ? When ? On the farm ?
 - b. Do you work better now ?
 - c. Are you satisfied with your job ?
2.
 - a. What is your wage ? Cash/kind
 - b. Has there been an increase in wages in the last few years ? When ?
 - c. Do you get medical aid ? What ?
 - d. Incentives ?
 - e. Working hours ?
 - f. Are you satisfied ?
3. Are there any work-related workers' committees on the farm ?
4.
 - a. What is the relationship between management and workers like ?
 - i. Does management involve itself in the work a lot ?
 - ii. Can you suggest a different method of production ?
 - iii. Have you asked for higher wages ? What happened ?
 - b. What is the relationship between workers like ?
 - i. Do you work as a team ? Do you work better this way ?
 - ii. Can you discuss problems with other workers ? African or coloured?
5.
 - a. How has the composition of the workforce changed ?
 - i. Do women, who live on the farm, work here ? Have they always?
 - ii. Do African migrant workers work here ? Have they always ?
 - iii. How do you work with African/coloured/women ?
6.
 - a.
 - i. What is the condition of your house ?
 - ii. How many rooms, is there a toilet inside the house, electricity ?
 - b. What community facilities are there ?
 - c. Are there schools and preschools on the farm ? Otherwise where do your children go to school ?
 - d. Are you satisfied with these things ?
7.
 - a. Is there a liaison committee ?
 - b. Are you on it ? How many workers are on it ? What does it do ? Does it meet with management ? Are there ever general meetings on the farm ? What is discussed ? Are there elections?
8.
 - a. Are there farm rules ?
 - b. Did you help decide on them ?

- c. What happens if you do something wrong ?
- 9. a. Are there clubs and societies here ?
b. What are these and when did they start ?
c. Are they popular amongst workers ?
d. What do you do after work and at the weekends ?
- 10. a. What is the relationship between workers like in the community ?
b. Between African and coloured workers ?
c. Do you ever have get-togethers ?
d. Has this changed ? In what way ?
- 11. a. Do you go to church ?
b. Do most workers go to church ? Where ?
- 12. a. Do you think this development has helped you ?
b. Why do you think management is changing all these things ?
c. How do you think things will be in the future ?
- 13. a. Have you heard of trade unions ?
b. Where did you hear ?
c. Do you think they are good ? Why ?
d. What does management think ?

B. Questions for management

- 1. a. What are the main ways in which you have tried to improve productivity ?
i. Training ? What ?
ii. Incentives ? What ?
iii. Mechanisation ? What ?
iv. Changed work organisation ?
b. Why these methods
c. Who initiated it and who undertook it ?
d. When did it begin and why then ?
e. Has it been successful ? How ?
i. Does the work flow smoother ?
ii. Have workers got more responsibility ?
iii. Has it decreased absenteeism ?
iv. Workers' attitudes ?
- 2. a. Changes in composition of the workforce ? Present numbers ?
i. African and coloured ?
ii. Men and women ?
iii. Permanent and casual ?
iv. Ages ?
v. Management, how has it changed ?
- 3. Working conditions ? How have they changed ?
a. Wages ? Cash/Kind

- i. Different categories, men/women, African/coloured, skilled/unskilled
 - b. Medical ?
4. a. Do you have workers' committees dealing with work-related issues ? What is its role ?
- b. Supervisors ? What is their role ?
- c. How have the relationships changed in the workplace ?
- i. Management and workers ?
 - ii. Between workers ?
5. a. What is the condition - and has it changed - of ?
- i. Houses
 - ii. Community facilities
- b. What education facilities are available for the children ?
- c. What clubs and societies exist and how have these changed ?
6. Is there a liaison committee ? Why Not ?
- a. What is its role ?
 - b. How is management involved ?
 - c. What will its role be in the future ?
7. a. Why did you join the Rural Foundation ?
- b. What have the workers gained from it ?
- c. Where is it all going in the future ?
- d. Why do you think the Rural Foundation is doing this ?
8. a. Have trade unions tried to organise here ? What happened ?
- b. i. How do you feel about unions ?
- ii. Will you allow them onto the farms ?
 - iii. Will workers join ?
- c. What effect will it have on your relationship with the workers ?
- d. Do you think the Rural Foundation's involvement on the farms is helping management prepare for unions ?
9. a. Are you part of a farmers' union ? Which ?
- b. Does it encourage upgrading on the farms ?

APPENDIX TWO

CAMP AND WORK REGULATIONS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The following regulations have been established to ensure that you and your family will be happy in the living quarters and to create a pleasant spirit and good disposition amongst the residents.

1.2 It is expected that the residents will adhere strictly to the rules and a breaking of the rules will be regarded in a serious light.

1.3 The management and committee reserve the right to amend or adjust the rules.

1.4 The farm manager and the committee are responsible for implementation of the rules and all recommendations and complaints must be directed to them.

2.0 RESIDENTS

2.1 Authorised inhabitants are married couples and their dependant children, also their own children who work on the farm.

2.2 All those who do not fall into category 2.1. must first get permission from the farm manager in order to live in the houses.

2.3 Overnight guests must at all times get permission from the committee-member on duty.

2.4 All women, and children not at school, are expected to work on the farm.

2.5 All children of school-going age must attend the school.

2.6 Any child that has to board, must be reported by the head of the house. The cost is R12.50 per week per person.

2.7 Doctor's visits must, where possible, only be arranged during consulting hours, especially in the evenings and on weekends.

2.8 Children and youth must at all times be subject to authority.

2.9 The house occupant is at all times responsible for all people either living in or visiting his house.

3.0 WORK

3.1 Working hours must be strictly adhered to.

3.2 Report absence as a result of sickness or any other problems as soon as possible.

3.3 Work injuries must be reported immediately.

3.4 No use or abuse of alcohol or drugs will be tolerated.

3.5 Keep tools in good condition at all times.

3.6 Tractors and implements must at all times be driven and handled with care.

3.7 Wood transport must be arranged in the morning. Only one tractor and trailer will be available each evening. Only recognised drivers will be accepted.

4.0 HOUSES AND PREMISES

4.1 Occupants are encouraged to keep their houses and gardens neat and tidy.

4.2 Broken windows or any other damages shall be claimed from the occupant.

4.3 Stoves, baths and hot water geysers remain the property of the farm and must be looked after accordingly.

4.4 No alterations at own risk may be made to the electricity.

4.5 Rubbish bins must be used for rubbish only and the committee timeously arrange for collection thereof.

5.0 HALL

5.1 No misbehaviour in the hall.

5.2 No misuse of the chairs or other furniture.

5.3 Smokers must please use ashtrays.

5.4 TV viewing times will be arranged through the committee.

5.5 Children may only watch TV till 8pm during the school-week.

6.0 CHILDREN AFTER-HOURS

6.1 No children are allowed in the orchards.

6.2 Children may not fiddle with beehives or tools.

6.3 Parents must encourage children to attend homework supervision classes.

6.4 Parents must encourage children to attend Sunday School.

7.0 ALCOHOL AND NARCOTICS

7.1 The abuse of alcohol and the use of narcotics is strictly forbidden.

7.2 Trading will lead to immediate dismissal.

7.3 No beer-making will be allowed.

7.4 Alcohol may only be consumed indoors.

8.0 ANIMALS

8.1 No dogs allowed.

8.2 Pigs and chicken must be looked after and kept in pens.

9.0 CRECHE

9.1 Parents must please ensure that their children are clean and tidy when they bring them to the creche.

9.2 Parents must ensure that children are brought to the creche in good health.

10.0 ORDER

10.1 Householders are responsible for the order of inhabitants.

10.2 Sundays must be respected.

10.3 The use of foul language, drunkenness and misbehaviour will be regarded in a serious light.

10.4 Socialising with and buying alcohol from the Bantus is forbidden.

10.5 No fighting or stabbing is allowed.

10.6 The committee must be respected at all times.

10.7 Any neglect in following the rules laid out above will be punishable with a fine.

Original of Farm A's Rules.

KAMP- EN WERKREÛLS

1.0 INLEIDING

- 1.1 Die onderstaande Regulasies is opgestel om te verseker dat u en u gesin gelukkig sal wees in die woongebied en om 'n aangename gees en goeie gesindheid by die inwoners te skep.
- 1.2 Daar word van die bewoners verwag om streng by die reëls te hou en 'n verbreking van die regulasies sal in 'n ernstige lig beskou word.
- 1.3 Die bestuur en komitee behou die reg voor om die regulasies te wysig of aan te pas.
- 1.4 Die plaasbestuur en die komitee is vir die toepassing van die reëls verantwoordelik en alle aanbevelings en klagtes moet aan hulle gerig word.

2.0 INWONERS

- 2.1 Gemagtigde inwoners sluit in 'n getroude egpaar met hul afhanklike kinders, sowel as eie kinders wat op die plaas werk.
- 2.2 Alle persone wat nie onder 2.1 resorteer nie, moet vooraf verlof van die plaasbestuurder kry om in die huise te mag woon.
- 2.3 Oornag kuiergaste moet ten alle tye verlof van die komitee-lede aan diens verkry.
- 2.4 Daar word van vroue en kinders wat nie skool bywoon nie, verwag om op die plaas te werk.
- 2.5 Alle kinders van skoolgaande ouderdom moet die skool bywoon.
- 2.6 Enige kind wat noodgedwonge moet losser, moet deur die hoof van elke huis gerapporteer word. Koste beloop 2 Soper week per persoon.

- 2.7 Doktersbesoeke moet waar moontlik slegs gedurende spreek-
ure gereël word, veral in aande en naweke.
- 2.8 Kinders en jongmense moet hulle te alle tye aan gesag
onderwerp.
- 2.9 Die huisbewonder is verantwoordelik vir alle persone wat in
sy huis woon of kuier.

3.0 WERK

- 3.1 Werksure moet stiptelik nagekóm word.
- 3.2 Rapporteer afwesigheid as gevolg van siekte of enige ander
probleme so spoedig moontlik.
- 3.3 Werksbeserings moet onmiddellik gerapporteer word.
- 3.4 Geen gebruik of misbruik van drank of enige dwelms sal
toegelaat word nie.
- 3.5 Hou gereëdskap te alle tye in 'n goeie toestand.
- 3.6 Trekkers en implemente moet te alle tye met versigtigheid
en sorg gehanteer en bestuur word.
- 3.7 Hout-ry moet reeds in die voormiddag gereël word. Slegs een
trekker en sleepwa sal per aand toegelaat word. Net 'n erkende
drywer sal aanvaar word.

4.0 HUISE EN PERSELE

- 4.1 Bewoners word aangemoedig om hul huise en tuine te versorg
en netjies te hou.
- 4.2 Gebreekte ruite of enige ander beskadiging sal van die
inwoner verhaal word.
- 4.3 Stowe, baddens en waterverwarmers bly die eiendom van die
plaas en moet dienooreenkomstig versorg word.
- 4.4 Geen veranderings mag op eie risiko aan elektrisiteit gemaak
word nie.

- 4.5 Vullisdromme moet net vir vullis gebruik word en komitee moet tydig kennis gee wanneer verwydering moet geskied.

5.0 SAAL

- 5.1 Geen wangedrag in die saal nie.
- 5.2 Daar mag nie op stoele of ander meubels gery word nie.
- 5.3 Rokers moet asseblief asblikkies gebruik.
- 5.4 TV-tye sal deur komitee gereël word.
- 5.5 Kinders mag gedurende skool-weke slegs tot 8nm TV kyk.

6.0 KINDERS NA-URE

- 6.1 Geen kinders word in boorde toegelaat nie.
- 6.2 Kinders mag nie met byneste of gereedskap peuter nie.
- 6.3 Ouers moet kinders aanmoedig om toesigklasse by te woon.
- 6.4 Ouers moet kinders aanmoedig om Sondagskool by te woon.

7.0 DRANK- EN VERDOWINGSMIDDELS

- 7.1 Die misbruik van drank en die gebruik van verdowingsmiddels is streng verbode.
- 7.2 Smokkel sal tot onmiddellike kennisgewing aanleiding gee.
- 7.3 Geen biermakery sal toegelaat word nie.
- 7.4 Drank mag slegs binnehuis gebruik word.

8.0 DIERE

- 8.1 Geen honde word toegelaat nie.
- 8.2 Varke en hoenders moet versorg word en in hokke gehou word.

9.0 CRÈCHE

- 9.1 Ouers moet asseblief hul kinders skoon en netjies by bewaring afgee.
- 9.2 Ouers moet toesien dat kinders in 'n gesonde toestand by bewaring gelaat word.

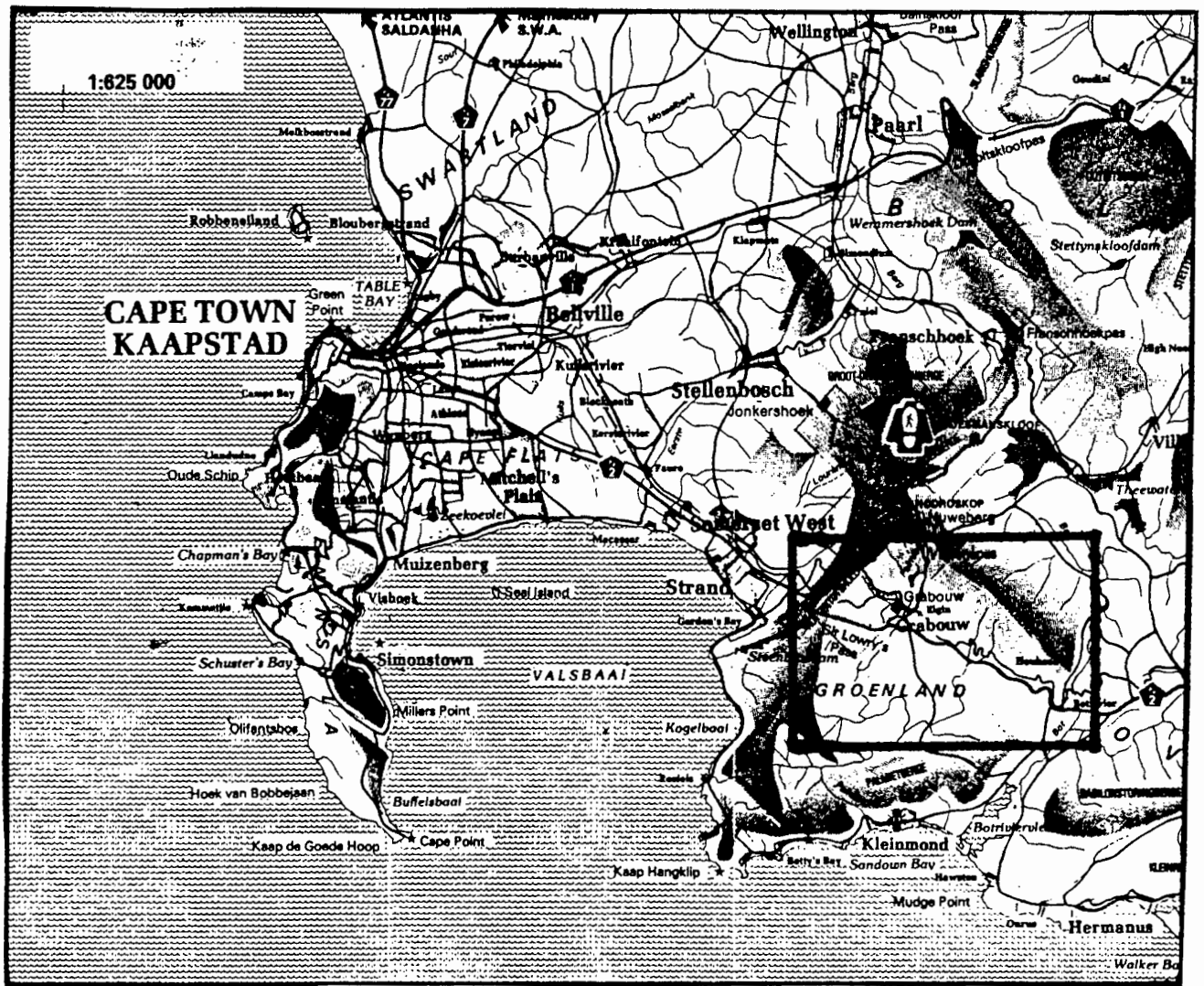
10.0 ORDE

- 10.1 Huisbewoners is vir die orde van inwoners aanspreeklik.
- 10.2 Sondaes moet gerespekteer word.
- 10.3 Die gebruik van vuiltaal, dronkenskap en wangedrag sal in 'n ernstige lig beskou word.
- 10.4 Die rondlê en drank-kopery by die Bantoes word verbied.
- 10.5 Geen bakleiery of messtekery word toegelaat nie.
- 10.6 Komitee moet te alle tye gerespekteer word.
- 10.7 Die versuim om bogenoemde reëls na te kom, sal met 'n boete strafbaar wees.

OP LAS:- KAMPKOMITEE EN PLAASBESTUUR

APPENDIX THREE

Map Showing Elgins' Position in Relation To Cape Town



APPENDIX FOUR

Interviews conducted

1. Farm A

- i. Manager A - white general manager
 - two interviews - 23 February 1989
 - 8 August 1989
- ii. Worker A1 - coloured supervisor and chairperson of the liaison committee
 - one interview - 23 February 1989
- iii. Worker A2 - coloured supervisor
 - one interview - 23 February 1989
- iv. Worker A3 - coloured general labourer and secretary of the liaison committee
 - one interview - 23 February 1989
- v. Worker A4 - coloured NTI-trained instructor and office assistant
 - one interview - 23 February 1989
- vi. Worker A5 - African supervisor, migrant worker recruiter and chairperson of the African workers' committee
 - one interview - 23 February 1989

2. Farm B

- i. Manager B - coloured general manager
 - one formal interview - 11 July 1989
 - one informal interview - 12 July 1989
- ii. Worker B1 - coloured NTI-trained instructor, supervisor (for part of the year) and general labourer (for the other part of the year)
 - one interview 12 July 1989
- iii. Worker B2 - coloured general labourer and member of the liaison committee
 - one interview - 12 July 1989
- iv. Worker B3 - African general labourer, migrant worker
 - one interview - 11 July 1989

3. Farm C

- i. Manager C - white owner and general manager
 - one interview - 14 July 1989

- ii. Worker C1 - coloured 'foreman' and mechanic
- one interview - 14 July 1989
- iii. Worker C2 - coloured woman, general labourer on 'maternity leave'
- one interview - 14 July 1989

4. Farm D

- i. Manager D1 - white general manager, daughter of the owner
- one interview - 8 March 1989
 - ii. Manager D2 - white accountant
- one interview - 8 August 1989
 - iii. Worker D1 - brick-layer and general maintenance person
- one interview - 8 March 1989
 - iv. Worker D2 - this was an interview with a husband and wife
- Husband - tractor driver in fruit section
- Wife - forewoman in piggery
- one interview - 8 March 1989
5. Manager E - general manager
- one interview - 12 July 1989
6. O. Bosman - general manager of the Rural Foundation
- one interview - 23 September 1986
7. Developer 1 - 'Manpower' developer employed by the ECDA
- one interview - 19 October 1987
8. Developer 2 - community developer responsible for youth, sport and liaison committees
- Developer 3 - community developer responsible for creches and women's clubs
- one combined interview - 20 March 1989
9. P. Kilpin - Chairperson of the ECDA executive committee
- one interview - 29 August 1989
10. R. Calvert - community development manager at a large farm
- Molteno Brothers
- one interview - 22 February 1989
11. A. Jones-Phillipson - Elgin Co-ordinator of National Training Institute
- one interview - 29 July 1989
12. L. Kirstein - Human Relations Specialist in the Deciduous

Fruit Unit of the National Productivity
Institute

- one informal discussion - 21 July 1989

13. P. Aploon - past organiser of the Farm Workers Project of
the Food and Allied Workers Union
- one interview - June 1988
14. M. Downs - manager of Valley Packers
- one telephone interview - July 1990
15. P. Swanepoel - Public Relations Officer of the Population
Development Programme
- one informal discussion August 1987

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